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**THE**  
**HISTORY OF FICTION.**

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THE  
**HISTORY OF FICTION:**

BEING  
*A CRITICAL ACCOUNT*

OF THE MOST CELEBRATED  
**PROSE WORKS OF FICTION,**  
FROM THE EARLIEST GREEK ROMANCES TO THE  
NOVELS OF THE PRESENT AGE.

By **JOHN DUNLOP.**

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

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# HISTORY OF FICTION, &c.

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VOL. III.

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# HISTORY OF FICTION, &c.

## CHAPTER IX.

*Origin of Spiritual Romance.—Legenda Aurea.—Contes Devots.—Guerino Meschino.—Ilycidas et Cleorithe.—Romans de Camus, &c.—Pilgrim's Progress.*

WE have now travelled over those fields of fiction, which have been cultivated by the writers of chivalry and the Italian novelists ; but the task remains of surveying those other regions which the industry of succeeding times has explored, and I have yet to give some account of those different classes of romance which appeared in France and other countries of Europe, previous to the introduction of the modern novel.

It has already been remarked, that the variations of romance correspond in a considerable de-

gree with the variations of manners. Something, indeed, must be allowed to the caprice of taste, and something to the accidental direction of an original genius to a particular pursuit; but still, amid the variety, there is a certain uniformity, and when the character of an age or people is decided, it must give a tinge to the taste, and a direction to the efforts, of those who court attention or favour, and who have themselves been nourished in existing prejudices and in commonly received opinions.

Of the natural principles of the human mind, none are more obvious than a spirit of religion; and in certain periods of society, and under certain circumstances, this sentiment has been so prevalent as to constitute a feature in the character of the age. It was to be expected, therefore, that a feeling so general and powerful should have been gratified in every mode, and that, amongst others, the easy and magical charm of fiction should have formed one of the methods by which it was fostered and indulged.

In the times which succeeded the early ages of Christianity, the gross ignorance of many of its votaries rendered them but ill qualified to relish the abstract truths of religion, or unadorned precepts of morality. The plan was accordingly adopted of adducing examples, which might interest

the attention and speak strongly to the feelings. Hence, from the zeal of some, and the artifice or credulity of other instructors, mankind were taught the duties of devotion by a recital of the achievements of spiritual knight errantry.

The history of Josaphat and Barlaam, of which an account has already been given, and which was written to inspire a taste for the ascetic virtues, seems to have been the origin of Spiritual Romance. It is true, that in the first ages of the church, many fictitious gospels were composed, full of improbable fables; but, as they contained opinions in contradiction to what was deemed the orthodox faith, they were discountenanced by the fathers of the church, and soon fell into disrepute. On the other hand, the history of Josaphat and Barlaam, which was more sound in its doctrine, passed at an early period into the west of Europe, and through the medium of the old Latin translation, which was a common manuscript, and was even printed so early as the year 1470, it became a very general favourite.

As far back as the fourth century, St Athanasius visited Rome, in order to obtain succour from the western church against the Arian heresy, which then prevailed in the east; and during his abode in Italy, he wrote the life of St Anthony, the most



renowned Cenobite of the age. From the earliest periods of the church, innumerable legends had been written or compiled by Gregory of Tours and St Gregory, selections from which have been more recently published under the title of *Vies des peres de desert*. All these legends present nearly the same circumstances—the victims of monastic superstition invariably retire to solitude, where they make themselves as uncomfortable as they can by every species of penance and mortification ; they are alternately terrified and tempted by the demon, over whom they invariably prevail ; their solitude is interrupted by those who come to admire them, which must have been the great motive for perseverance ; they all cure diseases, and wash the feet of lepers ; they foresee their own decease, and, spite of their efforts and prayers, their existence is usually protracted to a preternatural duration.

One peculiarity in the history of these saints is the dominion which they exercise over the animal creation. Thus, St Helenus, who dwelt in the deserts of Egypt, arriving one Sabbath at a monastery on the banks of the Nile, was justly scandalized to find that mass was not to be performed that day. The monks excused themselves on the ground that their priest, who was on the

opposite side of the river, hesitated to cross on account of a crocodile which had posted himself on the bank, and was, with some reason, suspected to be lying in wait for the holy man. Saint Helenus immediately went in quest of the crocodile, and commanded the animal to ferry him over on his back to the other side of the river, where he found the priest ; but could not persuade this man of little faith to embark with him on the crocodile. He accordingly repassed alone, but being in very bad humour at the ultimate failure of his expedition, he commanded the crocodile to expire without farther delay, an injunction which the monster fulfilled with due expedition and humility.

St Florentin finding that the solitude to which he had withdrawn was more than he could endure, begged some solace from heaven. One day, accordingly, after prayer in the fields, he found at his return a bear stationed at the entrance to his cell. On the approach of St Florentin the bear made his obeisance, and so far from exhibiting any symptoms of a natural moroseness, he testified, as well as his imperfect education permitted, that he stood there for the service of the holy man. Our saint, however, received so much pleasure from his company, that he feared incurring a violation of his oaths of penance : he therefore resolved to

abstain from the society of the bear during the greater part of the day. As there were five or six sheep in his cavern, which no one led out to pasture, the idea struck the saint of having them tended by the bear. This flock at first showed some repugnance ; but, encouraged by the assurances of the saint, and mild demeanour of the shepherd. they followed him pleasantly to the fold. St Florentin usually enjoined his bear to bring them back at six, but on days of great fasting and prayer, he commanded him not to return till nine. The bear was punctual to his time, and whether his master appointed six or nine, this exemplary animal never confounded the hours, nor mistook one for the other !

This miracle continued for some years, but at length the demon, envious of the proficiency of the bear, prompted certain evil-disposed monks in the vicinity, who at his instigation laid snares and slew him. The saint could do no more than curse the unknown perpetrators of this act, who in consequence all died next day of putrid disorders.

Perhaps one cause of the popularity of these legends was the frequent details concerning the sexual temptations to which the saints were exposed. The holy men were usually triumphant, and almost the only example to the contrary is

that of Saint Macarius. This saint, when far advanced in life, resolved to retire from the world, leaving his wife and family to shift for themselves. The angel Raphael pointed out to him a frightful solitude, where he chose as his residence a cavern inhabited by two young lions which had been exposed by their mother. After he had lived here many years, the demon became envious of his virtue, and seduced him under form of a beautiful female, a figure which he assumes with great facility. St Macarius somehow instantly perceived the full extent of the iniquity into which he had been ensnared, and was, as may be believed, in the utmost consternation. The lions, though not aware of the whole calamity, were so much scandalized at his conduct, that they forsook the cavern. They returned, however, soon after, and dug a ditch the length of a human body. The repentant sinner, conceiving this to be the species of penance which these animals considered most suitable to his transgression, lay down in the hole, where the lions, with much solemnity and lamentation, covered him with earth, except head and arms. In this position he remained three years, subsisting on the herbs which grew within arms length. At the end of this period, who should reappear but the two lions, who dug out their old

master with the same gravity they had employed at his interment. This was accepted by the saint as a sign that his sins were forgiven, a conjecture which was confirmed by the appearance of our Saviour at the entrance of the cavern. Henceforth Macarius distrusted every woman ; and indeed the continence of the saints must have been wonderfully aided by their knowledge of the demon's power to assume this fascinating figure, as they would constantly dread being thus entrapped into the embraces of the common enemy of mankind.

The legends resembling those above mentioned, which were chiefly of Latin invention, were probably little countenanced under the more mild and rational institutions of St Benedict, the first founder of the monastic orders ; but were subsequently drawn from obscurity, to support the system of the ascetic followers of St Francis.

Besides the Latin legends, many forgeries by the monks of the Greek church were from time to time imported into France and Italy. To such writers the oriental fictions and mode of fabling were familiar, and hence we find that from imitation the western legends of the saints frequently resemble a romance, both in the structure and decorations of the story. Even the more early

Latin lives had been carried to Constantinople, where they were translated into Greek, with new embellishments of eastern imagination. These being returned to Europe, were restored to their native language, and superseded the more simple originals. Other Latin legends, of still later composition, acquired their decorations from the Arabian fictions, which had at length become current in Europe.

Such romantic inventions were admirably suited to serve the purposes of superstition. Many extravagant conceptions, too, were likely to arise spontaneously in the visionary minds of the authors. A believing and ignorant age, also, received as truth, what in the lives of the saints was sometimes only intended as allegory. The malignant spirit, so troublesome at bed and board to the monks and anchorites, might only have signified, that even in the desert we in vain seek for tranquillity, that temptations ever pursue, and that our passions assail us as strongly in the gloom of solitude, as in the revelry of the world. Imitators, whose penetration was inferior to their credulity, quickly invented similar relations, from which no instruction could be drawn, nor allegory deduced.

The grand repertory of pious fiction seems to have been the *Legenda Aurea* of Jacobus de Vo-

ragine, a Genoese dominican,—a work entitled Golden from its popularity, on the same principle that this epithet was bestowed on the Ass of Apuleius. A similar composition in Greek, by Simon Metaphrastes, written about the end of the 10th century, was the prototype of this work of the 13th century, which comprehends the lives of individual saints, whose history had already been written, or was current from tradition. The Golden Legend, however, does not consist solely of the biography of saints, but is said in the Colophon to be interspersed with many other beautiful and strange relations, which were probably extracted from the *Gesta Longobardorum*, and other sources too obscure and voluminous to be easily traced; indeed one of the original titles of the *Lægenda Aurea* was *Historia Lombardica*. The work of Voragine was translated into French by Jean de Vignai, and was one of the three books from which Caxton's Golden Legend was compiled.

From the store-house of Jacobus de Voragine, the history of well-known saints was subsequently extracted. There we find the account of St George and the Dragon, and also of the Sleepers of Ephesus;—a story which Gibbon has not disdained to introduce into his history (c. 33), and so universal, that it has been related in the Koran. The life of

Paul, originally written by St Jerome, occurs in the *Legenda*, and the abridgement given by Professor Porson, in his letters to Archdeacon Travis (p. 30), may serve as a specimen of the nature of the incidents related in the *Golden Legend*.

“ Anthony thought himself the most perfect monk in the world, till he was told in a vision, that there was one much more perfect than he, and that he must set out on a visit to the prince of anchorites. Anthony departed on this errand, and in his journey through a desert saw a centaur. Jerome modestly doubts whether it was the natural produce of the soil, fruitful in monsters, or whether the devil assumed this shape to fright the holy man. Some time after he saw a satyr, with an horned forehead and goat's feet, who presented him with some dates, as hostages of peace, and confessed that he was one of the false deities whom the deluded Gentiles worshipped. At last, Anthony, quite weary and exhausted, found Paul, and, while they were discoursing together, who should appear on a sudden, but a raven, with a loaf, which he laid down in their sight. ‘ Every day,’ said Paul to Anthony, ‘ I receive half a loaf; but on your arrival Christ has given his soldiers double provision.’ He also told Anthony that he himself should shortly die; he therefore desired



to be buried in the same cloak that Anthony received from Athanasius. Anthony set out full speed to fetch the cloak, but Paul was dead before his return. Here was a fresh distress; Anthony could find no spade nor pick-axe to dig a grave. But while he was in this perplexity, two lions approached with so piteous a roaring, that he perceived they were lamenting the deceased after their unpolished fashion. They then began to scratch the earth with their feet, till they had hollowed a place big enough to contain a single body. After Anthony had buried his friend's carcase in this hole, the two lions came, and, by their signs and fawning, asked his blessing, which he kindly gave them, and they departed in very good humour."

The *Tresor de l' Ame* is somewhat of the same description with the *Legenda Aurea*. It was translated from Latin into French, and printed in the end of the 15th century; but had been composed nearly two hundred years before that period. This work consists of a collection of histories, but it more frequently reports miracles operated on proper application, by the posthumous intercession of saints, than prodigies performed in the course of their lives. The longest article is an account of St Patrick's purgatory, which is mentioned in

the *Legenda Aurea*, but is here minutely described from the recital of a Spanish knight, who had been sent thither to expiate his crimes.

Besides the legends of the saints, a species of spiritual tales (*Contes Devots*), some in prose, and others in verse, was prevalent in France during the 12th and 13th centuries. These were probably written with a view of counteracting the effects of the witty and licentious tales of the *Trouveurs* and minstrels. They were mostly the production of monks, who believed the absurdities they heard, or scrupled not to invent new ones, to raise the reputation of the relics of their convents.

The most ancient collection of spiritual tales, is ascribed by some to Ceriton, an English monk of the 12th century; and by others to Hugo de St Victoire, a Parisian. It contains a mixture of *Æsopian fable*, with a great variety of pious and profane histories. There is a long account of a kind of wren, named after St Martin. One day, while sitting on a tree, this animal, which had long and slender legs, exclaimed in the fulness of its pride, "It matters not to me though the heavens fall, for, by aid of my strong limbs, I shall be able to support them." Presently a leaf dropped from

the tree, and the foolish boaster immediately flew away, exclaiming, " St Martin ! St Martin ! help your poor bird !"

Le Grand mentions two subsequent collections of spiritual tales in French verse, the first by Coinsi, or Comsi, Prior of a monastery at Soissons, who died in 1236. Many of the tales in this metrical compilation had been originally written in Latin, by Hugues Farsi, who was also a monk of Soissons. A great proportion of the stories of Farsi relates to miracles performed in the neighbourhood of Soissons by the Virgin, and in her fail by one of her slippers preserved in the monastery. These Comsi has translated into French rhyme, adding some others on devout topics, furnished by tradition, or invented by himself, and has given to the whole the title of *Miracles de Notre Dame*. The devil, incensed against him (as the author himself informs us,) on account of the good which his work was likely to produce, tried to choke him one day ; fortunately he had time to make the sign of the cross, but some time after the disappointed fiend stole from him certain valuable relics he possessed.

The second compilation alluded to by Le Grand, is entitled *Vies des Peres*, either because it relates the spiritual adventures of hermits, or because it

is partly extracted from the *Vies des Peres du Desert*. The tales in this collection are said by Le Grand to be far superior to those of Comsi, both in the choice of subjects and the art of narrative. It accordingly has furnished Le Grand with the best of those stories published under the title of *Contes Devots*, and which form a species of continuation or supplement to his *Contes et Fabliaux*.

Formerly the lives of the saints, and the miracles operated by their relics, had been the favourite topics ; but, towards the end of the 11th, and in the course of the subsequent centuries, the wonders performed by the Virgin became the prevailing theme. To her a peculiar reverence was at that time paid in France. A number of cathedrals and monasteries were dedicated to her honour, and she became the object of the most fervent worship. Hence she appears as the heroine of the histories of Farsi, the metrical compositions of Comsi, and the *Lives of the Fathers*. In all these works there were attributed to her an infinite love towards man,—a power almost omnipotent in heaven,—and an inclination, not only to preserve the souls, but to husband the reputations of the greatest criminals, provided she had been treated by them with proper deference and respect.

A young and handsome nun, we are told, was the vestry-keeper of a convent, and part of her daily employment was to ring for matins. In her way to the chapel for this purpose, she was obliged to pass through a gallery, where there stood an image of the Virgin, which she never failed to salute with an Ave. The devil, meanwhile, who had plotted the ruin of this nun, insidiously whispered in her ear that she would be much happier in the world, than detained in perpetual imprisonment ; that, with the advantages of youth and beauty which she possessed, there were no pleasures she might not procure, and that it would be time enough to immure herself in a convent when age should have withered her charms. At the same time the tempter rendered the chaplain enamoured of the nun he had been thus seducing, who, having been already prepared for love solicitations, was easily persuaded to elope with him. For this purpose, she appointed the chaplain a rendezvous on the following night at the convent gate. She accordingly came to the place of assignation ; but, having as usual said an Ave to the Virgin in passing through the gallery, she met at the gate a woman of severe aspect, who would not permit her to proceed. On the following night the same prayer having been repeated, a similar obstacle

was presented. The chaplain having now become impatient, sent an emissary to complain, and having learned the reason of his mistress not holding her appointment, advised her to pass through the gallery without her wonted *Avemaria*, and even to turn away from the image of the Virgin. Our nun was not sufficiently hardened to follow these instructions literally, but proceeded to the rendezvous by a different way, and of course met with no impediment in her elopement with the chaplain.

Still the Aves she had said from the time of her entrance into the convent were not thrown away; Our Lady was determined that the shame of so faithful a servant should not be divulged. She assumed the clothes and form of her votary; and, during the absence of the fugitive, assiduously discharged all her employments, by guarding the vestments, ringing the bells, lighting the lamps, and singing in the quire.

After ten years spent in the dissipation of the world, the fugitive nun, tired of libertinism, abandoned the companion of her flight, and conceived the design of returning to the monastery to perform penance. On the way to her former residence, she arrived one night at a house not far distant from the convent, and was charitably re-

ceived. After supper a conversation having arisen on various topics, she took an opportunity of inquiring what was said of the vestry-keeper of the neighbouring monastery, who had eloped about ten years before with the chaplain. The mistress of the house was much scandalized at the question, and replied that never had pure virtue been so shamefully calumniated ; that the nun to whom she alluded was a perfect model of sanctity ; and that Heaven itself seemed to bear witness to her merits, for that she wrought miracles daily.

This discourse was a mystery for the penitent ; she passed the night in prayer, and in the morning repaired, in much agitation, to the porch of the convent. A nun appeared and asked her name. " I am a sinful woman," she replied, " who am come hither for the sake of penance ;" and then she confessed her elopement and the errors of her life. " I," said the pretended nun, " am Mary, whom you faithfully served, and who, in return, have here concealed your shame." The Virgin then declared that she had discharged the duties of vestry-keeper, exhorted the nun to repentance, and restored her the religious habit which she had left at her elopement. After this the Virgin disappeared, the nun resumed her functions without any

one suspecting what had happened. Nor would it ever have been known had she not herself disclosed it. The sisters loved her the more for her adventure, and esteemed her doubly, as she was manifestly under the special protection of the Mother of God.

In this tale, of which there are different metrical versions, and which also occurs in the *Tresor de l'Ame*, it will be remarked that the Virgin acts as a housemaid ; in another story she performs the part of a procuress, and in a third she officiates in an obstetrical capacity to an abbess, who had been frail and imprudent. Indeed, she is in general represented as performing the most degrading offices, and for the most worthless characters.

While the Virgin is the heroine in these compositions, the devil is usually the principal male performer. The monks of a certain monastery wished to ornament the gate of their church. One of their number, who was Sacristan, and who understood sculpture, placed on it a beautiful image of the Virgin. In most of the churches built in the time of these spiritual fablers, there was a representation of the Last Judgment near the entrance. Our Saviour appeared on that occasion in the design of the Sacristan, with the elect on his right-hand, and the damned on his left. Among the lat-



ter was a Satan, armed with an iron hook, and so hideous that no one could look on him without horror. The original, offended at the liberties which had been used with his figure, came one day to inquire at the artist why he had made him so ill-favoured. The Sacrist plainly told him it had been done from personal dislike, and for the express purpose of rendering him odious. These reasons not appearing satisfactory, the Enemy threatened him with vengeance if he did not change the figure in the course of the day. Next morning, when the devil came to look at the alterations, he found the Sacristan mounted on a scaffold, and employed in adding new horrors to the representation. "Since you are determined that we should be foes," exclaimed the irritated demon, "let us see how you can leap." With these words he overthrew the scaffolding; but the Sacristan had no sooner called the Virgin to his succour, than her image stretched out its arms to uphold him, and, after suspending him some time in the air to give the beholders time to admire this beautiful miracle, she placed him gently on the ground, to Satan's infinite shame and mortification. Though humiliated by this failure, he did not renounce his schemes of vengeance, but adopted a new plan, which, at least, reflected more ho-

nour on his ingenuity than the overthrow of the scaffold.

Near the monastery there resided a young and devout widow, and between her and the Sacristan the Tempter excited a reciprocal attachment. The lovers resolved to fly to a foreign land, and the monk annexed to this design the scheme of carrying with him the treasures of the convent. They eloped at an appointed hour, and the Sacristan, according to his plan, carried off the cross, the chalices, and censers. Meanwhile the fiend was on watch, and scarcely had his enemy cleared the precincts of the monastery, when he ran through all the dormitories, calling out that a monk was carrying off the treasures of the abbey. The fugitives were pursued and taken, but the lady was permitted to retire unmolested. "This," adds the fabler, "would not happen in these days; there are few monks at present who would not have profited by the embarrassment of the fair captive."

As for the Sacristan, he was conducted to a dungeon. There the devil suddenly appeared to insult his misfortunes, but at the same time suggested a mode of reconciliation. "Efface," said he, "the villainous figure you have drawn, give me a handsome one in exchange, and I promise to extricate you from this embarrassment." The

offer tempted the monk ; instantly his chains fell off, and he went to sleep in his own cell. Next morning the astonishment of his brethren was excessive when they beheld him going at large, and busied with his usual employments. They seized him and brought him back to his dungeon, but what was their surprise to find the devil occupying the place of the Sacristan, and with head bent down, and arms crossed on his breast, assuming a devout and penitential appearance. The matter having been reported to the abbot, he came in procession to the dungeon, with cross and holy water. Satan, of course, had to decamp, *nolens volens*, but signalized his departure by seizing the abbot by the hood, and carrying him up into the air. Fortunately for the father he was so fat that he slipped through his clothes, and fell naked in the midst of the assembly, while the fiend only carried off the cowl, which, on account of his horns, proved perfectly useless to him.

It was of course believed that the robbery had been committed by the demon in shape of the Sacristan, who soon after fulfilled his promise of forming a handsome statue of his old enemy and late benefactor. "This tale," says the author, "was read every year in the monastery of the White Monks for *their edification*."

The monks gave to the devil a human form, hideous, however, and disgusting. In the miniatures of manuscripts, the paintings in cloisters, and figures on the gates and windows of churches, he is represented as a black withered man, with a long tail, and claws to his feet and hands. It was also believed that he felt much mortification in being thus portrayed.

One of the most celebrated stories in the spiritual tales, is "*De l'Hermite qu' un Ange conduisit dans le Siecle.*" It is not in the collection of Comsi, but occurs in the *Vies des Peres*, whence it has been abstracted by Le Grand.

A hermit, who had lived in solitude and penance from his earliest youth, began at length to murmur against Heaven, because he had not been raised to one of those happy and brilliant conditions, of which his quest for alms sometimes rendered him witness. Why, thought the recluse, does the Creator load with benefits those who neglect him? Why does He leave his faithful servants in poverty and contempt? Why has not He, who formed the world, made all men equal? Why this partial allotment of happiness and misery?

To clear these doubts, the hermit resolved to quit his cell and visit the world, in search of some

one who could remove them. He took his staff and set out on his journey.

Scarce had the solitary left his hermitage when a young man of agreeable aspect appeared before him. He was in the habit of a *sergent*, (a word used to denote any one employed in military or civil service,) but was in fact an angel in disguise. Having saluted each other, the celestial Spirit informed the hermit that he had come to visit his friends in that district, and as it was tiresome to travel alone, he was anxious to find a companion to beguile the way. The recluse, whose project accorded wonderfully with the designs of the stranger, offered to accompany him, and they continued their journey together.

Night overtook the travellers before they had extricated themselves from a wood: fortunately, however, they perceived a hermitage, and went to beg an asylum. They were hospitably received by the solitary inhabitant, who gave them what provisions he could afford; but when the hour of prayer was come, the guests observed that their host was solely occupied in scouring a valuable cup from which they had drunk during the repast. The angel noted where the hermit had laid it, rose by night, concealed it, and in the morning, without saying a word, carried it off with him. His

companion was informed on the road of this theft, and wished to return, for the purpose of restoring the goblet. "Stay," said the angel, "I had my reasons for acting thus, and you will learn them soon; perhaps in my conduct you may again find cause of astonishment, but whatever you may see, know that it proceeds from a proper motive." The hermit was silent, and continued to follow his mysterious companion.

When tired with their journey, and wet with rain which had fallen during the whole day, they entered a populous town; and as they had no money, they were obliged to demand shelter from gate to gate in the name of God. They were everywhere refused an asylum, for Dom Argent, whom the English minstrels style Sir Penny, was then (says the tale), as he still is, more beloved than God. Though the rain still continued they were forced to lie down on the outer stair of a house which belonged to a rich usurer, who would scarce have given a halfpenny to obtain Paradise. He at this moment appeared at the window. The travellers implored an asylum, but the miser shut the casement without reply. A servant, more compassionate than her master, at length obtained his permission to let them in, suffered them to lie on

a little straw spread under the stair, and brought them a plate of peas, the relics of her master's supper. Here they remained during night in their wet clothes, without light and without fire. At day-break the angel, before their departure, went to pay his respects to their landlord, and presented him with the cup which he had stolen from his former host. The miser gladly wished them a good journey. On the way the hermit, of course, expressed his surprise, but was commanded by the angel to be circumspect in his opinions.

The evening of the third day brought them to a monastery, richly endowed. Here they were sumptuously entertained; but when they were about to depart, the angel set fire to the bed on which he had lain. On ascending a hill at some distance, the hermit perceived the monastery enveloped in flames. When informed that this also was the work of his fellow-traveller, he cursed the hour in which he had been associated with such a wretch, but was again reprimanded by the angel for his rash conclusions.

On the night of that day the pilgrims lodged with a wealthy burgess. Their host was a respectable old man, who had grown gray with years, but lived happily with a beloved wife and an only son.

of ten years of age, who was his chief consolation. He entertained the travellers with much kindness, and bade them on the morrow an affectionate adieu.

To reach the high road, however, it was necessary to pass through the town, and to cross a river. Pretending that he was unacquainted with the way, the angel persuaded the old man to allow his son to accompany them to the bridge, and point out to them their path. The father awakened his child, who joyfully came to conduct the travellers. In passing the bridge the angel pushed him into the stream, by which he was instantly overwhelmed. "My work is accomplished," said the angel; "art thou satisfied?" The hermit fled with the utmost precipitation, and, having gained the fields, sat down to deplore the folly of having left his cell, for which God had punished him by delivering him up to a demon, of whose crimes he had become the involuntary accomplice.

While engaged in this lamentation he was rejoined by the heavenly messenger, who thus addressed him:—"In thy cell thou hast arraigned the secret counsels of God: thou hast called in question his wisdom, and hast prepared to consult the world on the impenetrable depth of his designs. In that moment thy ruin was inevitable,



had his goodness abandoned thee. But he has sent an angel to enlighten, and I have been commissioned for this ministry. I have in vain attempted to show thee that world which thou hast sought, without knowing it; my lessons are not understood, and must be explained more clearly. Thou hast seen the care of a goblet occupy the mind of a hermit, when he ought to have been fully engaged in the most important of duties: now that he is deprived of his treasure, his soul, delivered from foreign attachments, is devoted to God. I have bestowed the cup on the usurer as the price of the hospitality which he granted, because God leaves no good action without recompence, and his avarice will one day be punished. The monks of the abbey which I reduced to ashes were originally poor, and led an exemplary life—enriched by the imprudent liberality of the faithful, their manners have been corrupted; in the palace which they erected, they were only occupied with the means of acquiring new wealth, or intrigues to introduce themselves into the lucrative charges of the convent. When they met in the halls, it was chiefly to amuse themselves with tales and with trifles. Order, duty, and the offices of the church, were neglected. God, to correct them, has brought them back to their pristine poverty. They will

rebuild a less magnificent monastery. A number of poor will subsist by the work, and they, being now obliged to labour the ground for their subsistence, will become more humble and better."

"I must approve of you in all things," said the hermit, "but why destroy the child who was serving us? why darken with despair the old age of the respectable father who had loaded us with benefits?" "That old man," replied the angel, "was formerly occupied with doing good, but as his son approached to maturity he gradually became avaricious, from the foolish desire of leaving him a vast inheritance. The child has died innocent, and has been received among the angels. The father will resume his former conduct, and both will be saved; without that, which thou deemest a crime, both might have perished. Such, since thou requirest to know them, are the secret judgments of God amongst men, but remember that they have once offended thee. Return to thy cell and do penance. I reascend to Heaven."

Saying thus, the angel threw aside the terrestrial form he had assumed and disappeared. The hermit, prostrating himself on earth, thanked God for the paternal reproof his mercy had vouchsafed to send him. He returned to his hermitage, and lived so holily, that he not only merited the par-

don of his error, but the highest recompence promised to a virtuous life.

This tale forms the eightieth chapter of the *Gesta Romanorum*, but there the conflagration of the monastery is omitted, and the strangulation of the infant in the cradle substituted in its place, while a new victim is conjured up for the submersion. Similar incidents are related in the *Sermones de Tempore* of a German monk of the 15th century. The story also occurs, with some additions and variations, in *Howell's Letters*, which were first published in 1650, but is professed to be transcribed from Sir Philip Herbert's *Conceptions*. There, on first setting out on the journey, the angel tumbles a man into the river because he meant that night to rob his master: he next strangles a child: after which follows the apparently whimsical transference of the goblets. Last of all, the travellers meet with a merchant, who asks his way to the next town, but the angel, by misguiding him, preserves him from being robbed.\* This deviation, I think, occurs in none of the other imitations, and it by no means forms a happy climax. The story has again been copied in the

\* *Howell's Letters*, b. 4. let 4.

Dialogues of the Platonic theologist Dr Henry More. It has been inserted, as is well known, in the chapter of Voltaire's *Zadig*, *De l' Hermite qu' un Ange conduisit dans le siecle*, and it also forms the subject of the *Hermit of Parnel*. That poem bears a closer resemblance to the tale, as related in the *Gesta Romanorum*, than to any of the other versions. Its author, however, has improved the subject by a more ample developement of the moral lesson, by a happier arrangement of the providential dispensations, and by reserving the discovery of the angel till the conclusion of the whole. But, on the other hand, the purloining the goblet in the *Conte Devot* might have been rationally expected to cure the hermit of his strange habit of scouring it in time of prayer; and the conflagration of the monastery might effectually have corrected the luxury and abuses that had crept into it; but Parnel's transference of the cup must have been altogether inadequate either for the reformation of the vain man, from whom it was taken away, or of the miser, on whom it was bestowed.

The first germ of this popular and widely diffused story may be found, though in a very rude and imperfect shape, in the eighteenth chapter of the *Koran*, entitled *the Cave*. Moses, while lead-

ing the children of Israel through the wilderness, found, at the meeting of two seas, the prophet Al Khedr, whom he accosted, " and begged to be instructed by him ; and he answered, Verily thou canst not bear with me : for how canst thou patiently suffer those things, the knowledge whereof thou dost not comprehend ? Moses replied, Thou shalt find me patient, if God please ; neither will I be disobedient unto thee in any thing. He said, If thou follow me, therefore, ask me not concerning any thing, until I shall declare the meaning thereof unto thee. So they both went on by the sea-shore, until they went up into a ship : and he made a hole therein. And Moses said unto him, Hast thou made a hole therein, that thou mightest drown those who are on board ? Now hast thou done a strange thing. He answered, Did I not tell thee that thou couldest not bear with me ? Moses said, Rebuke me not, because I did forget ; and impose not on me a difficulty in what I am commanded. Wherefore they left the ship, and proceeded, until they met with a youth ; and he slew him. Moses said, Hast thou slain an innocent person, without his having killed another ? Now hast thou committed an unjust action. He answered, Did I not tell thee that thou couldest not bear with me ? Moses said, If I ask thee concern-

ing any thing hereafter, suffer me not to accompany thee : now hast thou received an excuse from me. They went forward, therefore, until they came to the inhabitants of a certain city, and they asked food of the inhabitants thereof ; but they refused to receive them. And they found therein a wall, which was ready to fall down ; and he set it upright. Whereupon Moses said unto him, If thou wouldest, thou mightest doubtless have received a reward for it. He answered, This shall be a separation between me and thee : but I will first declare unto thee the signification of that which thou couldest not bear with patience. The vessel belonged to certain poor men, who laboured in the sea : and I was minded to render it unserviceable, because there was a king behind them, who took every sound ship by force. As to the youth, his parents were true believers ; and we feared lest he, being an unbeliever, should oblige them to suffer his perverseness and ingratitude : wherefore we desired that the Lord might give them a more righteous child in exchange for him, and one more affectionate towards them. And the wall belonged to two orphan youths of the city, and under it was a treasure hidden which belonged to them ; and

their father was a righteous man : and thy Lord was pleased that they should attain their full age, and take forth their treasure, through the mercy of thy Lord. And I did not what thou hast seen of mine own will, but by God's direction. This is the interpretation of that which thou couldest not bear with patience." (Sale's Koran, c. 18.)

Several other *Contes Devots*, like the story of the hermit, are of good moral tendency. The great proportion of them, however, are totally the reverse, as they tend to inculcate the doctrine that persons of the most profligate lives may be saved by the repetition of numerous Aves. In almost all, the perfection of morals and Christianity is represented as consisting in the recital of mass, in fasting, and corporeal mortification : sometimes, though rarely, there is added the distribution of alms. A few of the tales, as *La cour de Paradis*, one would think had been written for the purpose of turning every thing sacred into ridicule. Those relating to the sexual temptations, to which monks were subjected, as *Du Prevot d'Aquiléc* and *D'un Hermite et du duc Malaquin*, are extremely licentious ; and it is worthy of remark, that the lives of the nuns and monks are represented as much more profligate in the *Contes Devots* than in the lighter compositions of the *Trouveurs*.

These tales, whatever may be their faults or merits, were transmitted from age to age, and were frequently copied into the ascetic works of the following centuries. From the shade of the monastery, where they had their birth, they passed into the bosom of private families. It was also customary to introduce tales of this nature into the homilies of the succeeding periods. A very long and curious story of this description, concerning a dissolute bishop named Eudo, may be found in one of the *Sermones de Justitia*, of Mailard, a preacher of the fifteenth century. In 1389, a system of divinity appeared at Paris, entitled *Doctrinal de Sapyence*, translated by Caxton under title of *Court of Sapyence*, which abounds with a multitude of apologues and parables. About the year 1480, there was printed a promptuary or repository of examples for composing sermons, written by a Dominican friar at Basil, who informs us, in a sort of prologue, that St Dominic, in his discourses, always abounded in embellishments of this description.

Besides, it may be remarked, that the spiritual romance and the tales of chivalry have many features common to both. In the latter, the leading subject is frequently a religious enterprise. The quest of the Sangreal was a main object with the



knights of the Round Table, and the exploits of the paladins of Charlemagne chiefly tended to the expulsion of the Saracens and triumph of the Christian faith. The history of Guerin Meschino may be adduced as an instance of an intermediate work between the chivalrous and spiritual romances. It is full of the achievements of knight errantry, the love of princesses, and discomfiture of giants; yet it appears that the author's principal object was the edification of the faithful. This production was of a fame and popularity likely to produce imitation. Spain and Italy have claimed the merit of its original composition, but the pretensions of the latter country seem the best founded, and it is now generally believed to have been written by a Florentine, called Andrea Patria, in the 14th century. Be this as it may, it was first printed in Italian at Padua, 1473, in folio, and afterwards appeared at Venice, 1477, folio; Milan, 1520, 4to; and Venice, 1559, 12mo. It is the subject of a poem by Tullia Arragona, an Italian poetess of the 16th century. A French translation was printed in 1490. Mad. Oudot has included it in the *Bibliothèque Bleue*, with refinements of style which ill compensate for the *naïveté* of the original.

Guerin was son of Millon, king of Albania, a monarch descended from the house of Burgundy.

The young prince's birth was the epoch of the commencement of his parents' misfortunes. His father and mother were dethroned and imprisoned by an usurper, who would also have slain their heir had not his nurse embarked with him in a vessel for Constantinople. She unfortunately died during the voyage, but the child was taken care of, and afterwards educated, by a Greek merchant, who happened to be in the vessel, under the name of Meschino, an appellation derived from the unhappy circumstances of his childhood. When he grew up he attracted the notice, and passed into the service, of the son of the Greek emperor, with whom he acted as Grand Carver. At Constantinople he fell in love with the princess Elizena, his master's sister. There, too, he distinguished himself by his dexterity in tournaments, and also by his exploits in the course of a war, in which the empire was at that time engaged.

In spite of his love, his merit, and services, Guerin had, on one occasion, been called Turk by the princess Elizena, a term equivalent to slave or villain. To wipe away this reproach he determined on setting out to ascertain who were his parents, as they had hitherto been unknown to him. Concerning this expedition the emperor consulted the court astrologers, who, after due examination of

the stars, were unanimously of opinion that Guerin could learn nothing of his parentage, except from the Trees of the sun and moon, which grew at the eastern extremity of the world.

After this explication, Guerin prepared for the trip. Having received from the empress a relic composed of the wood of the true cross, which she affirmed would preserve him from every danger and enchantment, he embarked in a Greek vessel and landed in Little Tartary. Thence he took his route through Asia, and, having crossed the Caspian Sea, combated a giant, who seized all travellers he could overtake, especially Christians, and shut them up in his Garde Manger, not only for his own consumption, but to regale the giantess his wife with her four children, who had acquired the family relish for such refreshments. Guerin cut off the whole brood, and thus saved from the spit two prisoners who had been reserved for a *bonne bouche*.

Our hero on his way to India declined the offers made to him by a princess ; but the king her father was so much exasperated at this refusal that he threw him into prison, where he would inevitably have died of hunger, had not the lady he had so recently rejected disinterestedly brought him provisions. This kind procedure had such an effect

on the knight, that he broke, in favour of this good princess, an oath of purity he had rashly taken ; but as he only swore fidelity to her by Mahomet, he felt no scruple in abandoning her at the end of three months.

Guerin, in the course of his journey through India, saw great variety of monsters, and heard of dog-headed tribes, and nations with feet so large that they carried them over-head as umbrellas. At length he arrived at the extremity of India, where he found the trees of the sun and moon, who informed him that his name is not Meschino, which he had been hitherto called, but Guerin. He is also told, that he is the son of a king, but that, if he wish farther information, he must take the trouble of visiting the western extremity of the globe.

On his way back, Guerin re-established the princess of Persepolis in her dominions, of which she had been deprived by the Turks. As a mutual attachment arose between her and Guerin, a marriage would have taken place, had it not been for the recent information given by the solar trees. The indulgent princess allowed her lover ten years to discover his parents, and he promised to return at the end of that period.

Guerin next visited Jerusalem, paid his devotions at the holy sepulchre, and thence passed on a pilgrimage to Mount Sinai. From the Holy Land he penetrated into Ethiopia, and arrived at the states of Prester John. This ecclesiastical emperor was at war with a savage people, who had a giant at their head. Guerin assumed the command of Prester's army, and was eminently successful.

In his subsequent progress through Africa, Guerin converted many infidel kings to Christianity, and in one region he possessed himself of the whole country, except the dominions of King Validor. Against this pagan he prepared to take strenuous measures, but his trouble was much abridged by means of the sister of that monarch. This African princess had become enamoured of Guerin, from the account she had received of his beauty, valour, and strength. She therefore sent a messenger to offer him the head and kingdom of her brother, provided he would consent to espouse her ; or, at least, conduct himself as her husband. Some of Guerin's retinue received this embassy, and, apprehensive of the over scrupulous conscience of their master, returned in his name a favourable answer. The lady performed

her promise in the following manner : she intoxicated her brother, and as he became very enterprising in consequence, she cut off his head in an assumed fit of resentment. The gates of the capital were then opened to Guerin ; but, when the princess came to demand from him the recompense of her treachery, she was repulsed with the utmost contempt and indignation, being very ugly, and also red-haired,—a singular defect in an African.

After this, Guerin having heard that in the mountains of Calabria there lived a sibyl, who had predicted the birth of our Saviour, he resolved to interrogate her concerning his parents. When he arrived in her neighbourhood, he was informed that he had undertaken a very dangerous expedition, since the sibyl, though twelve hundred years old, still formed designs on the hearts of those who came to consult her, and that it was most perilous to yield to her seductions : but Guerin, who seems to have held in contempt the fascinations of a sibyl twelve hundred years old, was not deterred from his enterprise. In passing the mountains he met with a hermit, who pointed out to him a hollow in the rocks, which led to her abode. Having reached the end of this cavern, he came to a broad river, which he crossed on the back of

a hideous serpent, who was in waiting, and who informed him during the passage, that he had formerly been a gentleman, and had undergone this unpleasant transformation by the charms of the sibyl. Guerin now entered the palace of the prophetess, who appeared surrounded by beautiful attendants, and was as fresh as if she had been eleven hundred and eighty years younger than she was in reality. A splendid supper was served up, and she informed Guerin in the course of the conversation which arose after the repast, that she enjoyed the benefits of long life and unfading beauty, in consequence of having predicted the birth of our Saviour ; nevertheless, she confessed that she was not a Christian, but remained firmly attached to Apollo, whose priestess she had been at Delphos, and to whom she was indebted for the gift of prophecy ; her last abode had been at Cumae, whence she had retired to the palace which she now inhabited.

Hitherto the conversation of the sibyl had not been such as was expected from her endowments. It had been more retrospective than premonitory ; and, however communicative as to her personal history, she had been extremely reserved on the subject of her guest's. At length, however, she informed him of the names of his parents, and all

the circumstances of his birth. She farther promised to acquaint him, on some other occasion, with the place of their residence, and to give him some insight into his future destiny.

At night the sibyl conducted Guerin to the chamber prepared for his repose, and he soon perceived that she was determined to give him considerable disturbance, as she began to ogle him, and then proceeded to the narrowest scrutiny. The wood of the cross, however, which he had received from the Greek empress, and an occasional prayer, procured his present manumission from the sibyl, who was obliged to postpone her designs till the morrow, and thence to defer them for the five following days, owing to the repulsive influence of the same relic.

The prophetess, who seems in her old age to have changed the conduct which procured from Virgil the appellation of *Casta Sibylla*, still refrained from informing her guest of the residence of his parents, in order that, by detaining him in her palace, she might grasp an opportunity of finally accomplishing her intentions. One Saturday she unluckily could not prevent the knight from being witness to an unfortunate and inevitable metamorphose. Fairies, it seems, and those connected with fairies, are on that day invariably



converted into hideous animals, and remain in this guise till the ensuing Monday. Guerin, who had hitherto seen the palace inhabited only by fine ladies and gentlemen, was surprised to find himself in the midst of a *menagerie*, and to behold the sibyl herself contorted into a snake. When she had recovered her charms, Guerin upbraided her with the spiral form into which she had been lately wreathed. He now positively demanded his leave, which having obtained, he forthwith repaired to Rome, and though he had extricated himself from the den in the most Christian manner, he deemed it necessary to demand the indulgence of the holy father, for having consulted a sibyl who was at once a sorceress, a pagan, and a serpent. The pope imposed on him, as a penance, that he should visit the shrine of St James in Galicia, and afterwards the purgatory of St Patrick in Ireland, at the same time giving him hopes that in the latter place he might hear intelligence of his parents.

Guerin met with nothing remarkable during the first part of his expiatory pilgrimage. The account, however, of Saint Patrick's purgatory is full of wonders. When Saint Patrick went to preach in Ireland, the honest Hibernians refused to believe the articles of his creed, unless they re-

ceived ocular demonstration of their truth, so that the saint was obliged to set up a purgatory for their satisfaction.<sup>1</sup> On arriving in Ireland, Guerin waited on the archbishop, who, after having vainly attempted to dissuade him from this perilous expedition, gave him letters of introduction to the abbot of the Holy Island, which was the vestibule of purgatory. With the connivance of the abbot, Guerin descended into a well, at the bottom of which he found a subterraneous meadow. There he received instructions from two men clothed in white garments, who lived in an edifice built in form of a church. He was thence carried away by two demons, who escorted him from cavern to cavern, to witness the torments of purgatory. Each cavern, he found, was appropriated for the chastisement of a particular vice. Thus, in one, the *gourmands* were tantalized with the appearance and flavour of dressed dishes, and

<sup>1</sup> One of Calderon's plays turns on the establishment of the purgatory of St Patrick. That saint being shipwrecked in Ireland, conducted the infidel monarch of the country to the mouth of a cavern which led to purgatory. The king threw himself in blaspheming, as was his custom, and by an adroit stratagem of the saint, instead of reaching purgatory, he fell headlong into hell. This immediately effected the conversion of his subjects.

exquisite beverage, which eluded their grasp : while, at the same time, they were troubled with all the cholics and indigestions to which their intemperance had subjected them during life. This notion of future punishments, appropriate to the darling sins of the guilty, has been common with poets. It occurs in Dante, and we are told in one of Ford's dramas, that

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There are gluttons fed  
 With toads and adders : there is burning oil  
 Poured down the drunkard's throat ; the miser  
 Is forced to sup whole draughts of molten gold ;  
 There is the murderer for ever stabb'd,  
 Yet can he never die.

After Guerin had witnessed the pains of purgatory, he had a display of hell itself, which, in this work, is divided into circles, precisely on the plan laid out in Dante's *Inferno*. Indeed, the whole of this part of the romance must have been suggested by the unearthly excursions in the *Divina Commedia*. Judas Iscariot, Nero, and Mahomet, act the most distinguished parts in the tragedy now under the eye of Guerin. Among others, he recognised his old friend the giant Macus, whom he had slain in Tartary, and whose fate is a warning to all who

are guilty of an overgrowth, and who regale their wives and children with the flesh of Christian travellers. He also perceived the red-haired African princess, who, for Guerin's sake, had struck off the head of her intoxicated brother. His infernal *Ciceroni* made frequent efforts to add him to the number of the condemned, but were at length reluctantly obliged to give him up to Enoch and Elijah, who pointed out to him Paradise, about as near as Moses saw the Promised Land. These celestial guides, after telling him that he will hear of his parents in Italy, showed him the way back to earth, where he at last arrived, having passed thirty days without sleep or sustenance.

On his return to Rome, Guerin was sent to Albania by the pope, in order to expel the Turks, which, being accomplished, he discovered his father and mother in the dungeon where they had been all along confined. They were speedily re-established on their throne, and the romance concludes with the marriage of Guerin with the princess of Persepolis, to the great mortification of the Grecian princess Elizena, who now heartily repented having rashly denominated him Turk.

Such is the history of Guerin Meschino, who was certainly the most erratic knight of all those

who have traversed the world. No one discomfited a greater number of giants and monsters ; no one was more constant to his mistress, than he to the princess of Persepolis ; no one was so devout, as appears from his conduct in purgatory, and the abode of the sibyl, his numerous pilgrimages and successful conversions.

It cannot fail to have been remarked, in tracing the progress of fiction, that, when one species of fabulous writing gave place to another, this happened gradually, and that generally some mixed work was composed, partaking of the mutual qualities of the old and new system. For example, in the romance which we have now been considering, the elements both of the chivalrous and devotional method of writing are blended, but with a greater proportion of the former. In other productions the latter gradually prevailed, till, at length, the traces of the former were almost entirely obliterated : of those works in which spiritual began to gain an ascendancy over romantic fiction,

LES AVENTURES DE LYCIDAS ET DE  
CLEORITHE,

was the earliest and the finest specimen. It was composed in the year 1529, by the Sieur de Basire, archdeacon of Sees, though the author pretends that it was originally written in the Syriac language, and translated by him from a Greek version.

When the island of Rhodes was conquered by the Ottoman emperor, the young women were subjected to slavery, and to still severer misfortunes. One of their number, named Cleoritha, was allotted to the favourite minister of the sultan, and, on account of her beauty, was distinguished by the name of wife, from the crowd of surrounding concubines.

A Christian gentleman, named Lycidas, hearing of her misfortunes, and her inviolable attachment to the faith in which she had been brought up, conceived that a visit from him could not fail to be consolatory. By bribing an eunuch, he was introduced into the seraglio, and Cleoritha soon rewarded his attention, by lavishing on him favours,

which were with difficulty extorted by her mussulman husband.

This intercourse subsisted without detection or interruption for six years ; but at the end of that period the mind of Lycidas became a prey to religious melancholy : he poured forth his feelings of contrition before the penitentiary tribunal, but was shocked at the facility with which he obtained absolution for the crimes he acknowledged. Tormented by his conscience, and disgusted with his confessor, after writing a few lines to Cleoritha, to account for his absence, he departed with the intention of opening his heart to the bishop of Damascus.

On the approach of the night which concluded his first day's journey, Lycidas arrived at a small and solitary inn, by the side of a wood. Having asked the host for an apartment, he found there was no chamber except one, which, for a long period, had been the nightly rendezvous of demons and sorcerers. Lycidas insisted on that room being assigned to him, in spite of the assurance of the landlord, that for seven years past all the travellers who had slept in it, and, among the rest, a pacha, attended by six janissaries, had been disturbed by supernatural agents.

Scarcely had Lycidas entered the haunted apartment, when six damsels, in array of nymphs, appeared, and proposed to him with much apparent civility, that he should accompany them to their mistress. Lycidas at first eyed them with indifference, but at length yielding to the importunities of the fairest, he allowed himself to be conducted to a castle, where he was ushered into a splendid saloon, illumined by a thousand flambeaus. Twenty youths, and as many damsels, of dazzling charms, joined in voluptuous dances, while the most seductive music was poured from the fairest throats. The lady who presided over this festival appeared to be about the age of seventeen, and was of resplendent beauty.

The ball being concluded, the band of dancers and musicians retired, and Lycidas being left alone with the lady, she, mistaking his silence for respect, took an opportunity of encouraging him, by remarking, that the attendants had left her at his mercy. To this observation, and to subsequent overtures still more explicit and enticing, Lycidas maintained the most provoking silence. At length the lady gave vent to her resentment in reproaches, and then vanished from his view. Soon as she disappeared the lights are extinguished, the fabric falls with a tremendous crash into the abysses of



the earth, and Lycidas remains alone in the chaos of a dark and tempestuous night.

By the guidance of a pale and uncertain beam, he regains the solitary abode he had left. There he remains till dawn, when he departs, and arrives, without farther adventures, at the residence of the bishop of Damascus. Lycidas having explained to him the state of his soul, and his conscientious scruples, this prelate prescribes in the first instance the total renunciation of Cleoritha; he recommends that his penitent should then undertake a journey in the habit of a pilgrim, to all the memorable scenes of the Holy Land; that he should thence repair to Venice, to join the army of that republic in its attempts to re-conquer Cyprus, and should conclude with uniting himself to the knights of Jerusalem, in the citadel of Malta.

Lycidas accordingly commences these multifarious ordinances, by despatching a letter to his late mistress, in which he explains his intentions of divorcing himself from her and his vicious passions—urges her to repentance for her manifold transgressions, assures her that he will continue to love her as one loves the apostles, and that he is her obedient servant in God.

Cleoritha feels extremely indignant at this canting epistle. Her passion has yet such influence

over her soul, that she escapes from the seraglio to search for Lycidas, in those places where she thinks he is most likely to be found, and pours forth a torrent of abuse on being disappointed in her expectations of overtaking her lover.

Indeed, by this time, Lycidas was on his way to the Holy Land. On his road to Jerusalem he met with the devil and a hermit, who had a trial of strength for the soul of the pilgrim. The devil at first gained some advantage, but the victory remained in the hands of the saint. From Jerusalem Lycidas proceeds to Bethanie, to visit the oratory of the blessed Magdalene. In this place of devotion he feels all the beatitude attached to the progress of a tender repentance; and, remembering the similarity of his own fate to that of the frail, but pardoned sister of Lazarus, he honours her memory with a few tributary verses, such as,

“ O beaux yeux de la Magdalaine,  
Vous etiez lors un Mont *Æthna*,  
Et vous etes une Fontaine,” &c.

After leaving the Holy Land, Lycidas joins the Christian army in Cyprus, is appointed colonel of a Sclavonian regiment, and receives, while combating at its head, a mortal wound. He does not,

however, conceive himself exempted from continuing the activity he had exerted in this world, by his translation to the heavenly mansions. Scarcely has he tasted of celestial repose, when he appears one night to Cleoritha, (who by this time had returned to her infidel husband,) and exhorts her on the subject of devotion and her various duties. Unfortunately the spirit of religion inspired by this apparition, induces Cleoritha, with a view again to escape from the mussulman, to listen to the proposals of a Jew who had been long enamoured of her charms. By the advice of one of her female slaves, she receives him on the same footing on which Lycidas had been formerly admitted. The criminal intercourse is detected by the husband; he demands the severest justice of his country, and the same pile consumes the Jew, the slave, and Cleoritha.

About the end of the 16th century, a spiritual romance of some celebrity appeared in the Flemish dialect, written by Boetius Bolswert, an engraver, and brother of Scheldt Bolswert, who was still more famous in the same art. This production recounts the pilgrimage of two sisters, whose names are equivalent to Dove and Wilful, (in the French translation Colombelle and Volontairette,)

to Jerusalem, in quest of their Well-beloved. One was, as her name imported, mild and prudent ; the other, obstinate and capricious. The contrasted behaviour, and the different issue of the adventures which happen to these two sisters on their journey, form the intrigue of the romance. Thus, they arrive at a village during a fair or festival : *Volontairette* mingles in a crowd who are following a mountebank ; she returns covered with vermin, and her person is depopulated with much trouble. The other sister escapes by remaining at home, engaged in devotional exercises. This romance is mystical throughout : It is invariably insipid, and occasionally blasphemous.

A number of spiritual romances were written by Camus, bishop of Bely,<sup>†</sup> in the beginning of the 17th century. At the time when this prelate entered the ecclesiastical state, the taste for romance was so strong as to exclude almost every other species of reading. Hence, he is said to have found it necessary to present his flock with fictions, of which the scope was to impress their minds with sentiments of piety. As he had much zeal, and some imagination, and as his readers had but an indifferent taste, these works may have produced,

† See Appendix, No. 1.

in his own time, the benefit he expected ; but he wanted the art and judgment which alone could have rendered them lastingly popular : his numerous and mystical productions fell into disesteem, in the progress of refinement and learning, and a single specimen will satisfy the reader that they are hardly worth being rescued from the oblivion to which they have been consigned.

Achantes, a gentleman of Burgundy, is represented as the model of every Christian virtue. His wife Sophronia, whose character is drawn at full length, is an example of piety and conjugal affection. After the lapse of many years, in the course of which this union was blessed with a number of daughters, Achantes passed to a better life. His relict made a vow of perpetual widowhood, which probably no one had any intention of interrupting, and devoted her time to the education of her daughters, especially of the eldest, called Darie, the heroine of the romance. This young lady was afterwards placed under care of Theophilus, an enlightened ecclesiastic ; and the first fruit of her tuition was the foundation of a monastery. Her education being completed, she was married ; but her husband, soon after the nuptials, went abroad and died. The intelligence of his decease was communicated to his spouse by Theophilus, who

embraced that opportunity of expatiating on the various topics of religious consolation. Premature labour, however, was the consequence of the disastrous news, and Darie expired, after having been admitted among the number of the religious of that convent which she had formerly founded and endowed.

Of the works of Camus, however, many are rather moral than spiritual romances; that is to say, some moral precept is meant to be inculcated, independent of acts of devotion, the performance of pilgrimages, or foundation of monasteries. All of them are loaded with scriptural quotation, sometimes not very aptly applied, all are of a length fatiguing when compared with the interest of the story, and all are disfigured with affected antithesis and cumbrous erudition.

We have already had occasion to mention the *Contes Devots*, which were coeval with the *Fabliaux* of the *Trouveurs*. A collection of stories, partly imitated from spiritual tales, particularly the *Pia Hilaria* of Angelin Gazée, and partly extracted from larger works of devotion, with some added by the publisher, appeared in modern French in the middle of the seventeenth century. A few examples may be given, as instances of the ex-

treme of superstitious folly, and as specimens of what for a considerable period formed the amusement of the religious communities of France and the Netherlands.

A countryman one day was driving some lambs to slaughter ; fortunately for them, St Francis happened to be on the road. As soon as the flock perceived him, they raised most lamentable cries. The saint asked the clown what he was going to do with these animals—‘ cut their throats,’ replied he. Good St Francis could not contain himself at this revolting idea, nor resist the sweet supplications of these innocents ; he left his mantle with the barbarous peasant, obtained the lambs in exchange, and conducted them to his convent, where he allowed them to live and thrive at their leisure.

Among this little flock there was a sheep which the saint loved tenderly : he was pleased sometimes to speak to her, and instruct her. “ My sister,” said he, “ give thanks to thy Creator according to thy small means. It is good that you enter sometimes into the temple ; but be there more humble than when you go into the fold ; walk only on tiptoe ; bend your knees, give example to little children. But, above all, my dear sister, run not

after the rams; wallow not in the mire, but modestly nibble at the grass in our gardens, and be careful not to spoil the flowers with which we deck our altars."

Such were the precepts of St Francis to his sheep. This interesting creature reflected on them in private, (*en son particulier*,) and practised them so well, that she was the admiration of every one. If a Religious passed by, the beloved sheep of St Francis ran before him, and made a profound reverence. When she heard singing in the church, she came straightway to the altar of the Virgin, and saluted her by a gentle bleat; when a bell was sounded, which announced the sacred mysteries, she bent her head in token of respect. "O blessed animal!" exclaims the author, "thou wert not a sheep, but a doctor: thou art a reproach to the worldly ones, who go to church to be admired, and not to worship. I know," continues he, "that the Hugonot will laugh, and say this is a grandmother's tale; but, say what he will, heresy will be dispelled, faith will prevail, and the sheep of St Francis be praised for evermore."

On another occasion, St Francis contracted with a wolf, that the city would provide for him, if he would not raven as heretofore. To this condition he readily assented, and this amiable qua-



druped farther gratified St Francis by an assiduous personal attendance. Many saints have taken pleasure in associating with different animals, and St Anthony, we are somewhere told, made the goose his gossip; but this brotherhood with wolves seems peculiar to St Francis.

The Abbé de Corbie had the laudable custom of tenderly rearing a number of crows, in honour of his name. One of these birds was full of tricks and malice. Sometimes he pecked the toes of the novices, sometimes he pinched the tails of the cats, at other times he flew away with the dinner of his comrades, and obliged them to fast like the good fathers; but his highest delight was to pluck the finest feathers from the peacocks, when they displayed their plumage.

One day the Abbé de Corbie having entered the refectory, took off his ring to wash his hands: our crow darts on it adroitly, and flies off unobserved. When the abbé goes to put on his ring, it is not to be found; being unable to learn what has become of it, he hurls an excommunication against the unknown author of the theft. Soon the crow becomes plaintive and sad—he does nothing but pine and drag a languishing life—his feathers drop with the lightest breeze—his wings flag—his body becomes dry and emaciated—no more plucking

of peacocks' feathers—no more pinching of novices' toes. His condition now inspires compassion in those he had most tormented, and the commiseration even of the peacocks is excited. With a view of ascertaining the cause of his malady, his nest is visited, to see if he has gathered any poisonous plant. What is the astonishment of all, when the ring which the abbé had lost, and now forgotten, is here discovered ! As there is no longer a thief to punish, the anathema is recalled, and the crow resumes in a few days his gaiety and *embonpoint*.

Such were the tales invented and propagated by the monks, partly with pious, and partly with politic designs, which they imposed on the multitude as genuine history, and which were received with eager curiosity and devout credulity.

Some of these stories, absurd as they are, have served as the basis of French and English dramas : *Les Fils Ingrats* of Piron, coincides with one of these spiritual fictions. Another tale which occurs in the *Pia Hilaria*, is that of a drunk beggar, who is carried by the duke of Burgundy to his palace, where he enjoys for twenty-four hours the pleasures of command. This story is told of Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy, in Goulart's *Histoires Admirables*, whence it was translated in

one of Grimstone's "Admirable and Memorable Histories," which Malone considers the origin of the Induction to the Taming of the Shrew. The first notion, however, of such an incident was no doubt derived from the east. In the tale of the Sleeper Awakened, in the Arabian Nights Entertainments, the Caliph Haroun Alraschid gives a poor man, called Abon Hassan, a ~~seperific~~ powder, and has him conveyed, while under its influence, to the palace, where, when he awakes, he is obeyed and entertained as the Commander of the Faithful, till, another powder being administered, he is carried back on the following night to his humble dwelling.

Of the various spiritual romances which have appeared in different countries, no one has been so deservedly popular as the

### PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

of John Bunyan, an allegorical work, in which the author describes the journey of a Christian from the city of Destruction to the heavenly Jerusalem. The origin of the Pilgrim's Progress has been attributed by some to Barnard's Religious Allegory, entitled *The Isle of Man, or Proceedings in Man-*

shire, published in 1627, while others have traced it to the story of the Wandering Knight, translated from French by Wm. Goodyearc, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. *Le Pelerinage de l'Ame*, by Ant. Girard, printed at Paris in 1480, and subsequently translated by Caxton, relates, in manner of a dream, the progress of the soul after its departure from the body, till led up to the heavenly mansions. There is also an old French work, which was written by a monk of Calais, and was versified in English as far back as 1426, relating to a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and containing various dialogues between the Pilgrim's Grace-Dieu, Sapience, &c. The existence of such works can detract little from the praise of originality ; but, if the notion of a journey through the perils and temptations of life, to a place of religious rest, has been borrowed by the author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, it was most probably suggested by a Flemish work already mentioned, which describes the pilgrimage of Colombelle to Jerusalem.

The *Pilgrim's Progress* was written while the author was in prison, where he lay from 1660 to 1672 ; so that the date of its composition must be fixed between those two periods. This celebrated allegory is introduced in a manner which, in its

mysterious solemnity, bears a striking resemblance to the commencement of the *Vision of Dante*:—  
“As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a den, and laid me down in that place to sleep; and as I slept I dreamed a dream—I dreamed, and behold I saw a man clothed with rags, with a book in his hand. I looked and saw him open the book, and read therein, and as he read he wept and trembled,” &c. The author then describes the awakening spiritual fears of his hero, Christian—his resolution to depart from the city of Destruction, suggested perhaps by the flight of Lot from the devoted cities of the plain—his ineffectual attempts to induce his wife and family and neighbours to accompany him—his departure, and all the incidents, whether of a discouraging or comforting nature, which he encountered on his journey.

It was, perhaps, ill-judged in the author to represent Christian as having a wife and family, since, whatever be the spiritual lesson intended to be conveyed by his leaving them, one cannot help being impressed with a certain notion of selfishness and hard-heartedness in the hero. “Now he had not run far from his own house,” says the author, “but his wife and children perceiving it, be-

gan to cry after him to return ; but the man put his fingers into his ears, and ran on, crying, ‘ Life ! Life ! Eternal life !’ So he looked not behind him, but fled towards the middle of the plain.” This does not impress us with a very favourable idea of the disposition of the hero, and in fact, with the exception of faith and perseverance, he is a mere negative character, without one good quality to recommend him. There is little or no display of charity, beneficence, or even benevolence, during the whole course of the pilgrimage. The sentiments of Christian are narrow and illiberal, and his struggles and exertions wholly selfish.

The author, however, composed his work agreeably to the notion of Christianity existing in his time, and accordingly this must be kept in view while forming our judgment of its merit. It discovers a rich and happy invention, the incidents and characters are well portrayed, and there is much skill in the dramatic adaptation of dialogue to the characters introduced. But as the author was illiterate, his taste is coarse and inelegant, and he generally injures the beauty of his pictures by some unlucky stroke. The occasional poetry introduced is execrable.

In one point of view, however, this want of learning and taste is favourable to the general effect of

the work. It gives to the whole an appearance of simplicity and truth, which is also aided by the author, like Homer, abridging nothing, but again and again repeating dialogues as they were delivered, and incidents as they occurred. The only art which he possesses, and it has an agreeable effect, is the art of contrast. Thus, for example, the beautiful palace, where he is entertained by the four virgins, Watchful, Prudence, Piety, and Charity, is succeeded by his distressful combat with Apollyon in the Valley of Humiliation, and the confinement in the dungeon of giant Despair is immediately followed by the pleasing picture of the Delectable Mountains.

By the introduction of two other pilgrims in different parts of the journey of Christian, the first of whom, Faithful, dies a martyr, and the second, Hopeful, after the death of the former, accompanies Christian to the end of his pilgrimage, the author not only agreeably diversifies his work, but, by their history and conversation, has an opportunity of expounding his whole system of Faith, and of exhibiting the different means by which the same great object is attained. On the whole, according to the author's views of Christianity, the work is admirably conceived; and the difficulties of his task are a sufficient excuse for those in-

congruities which, it must be confessed, occasionally occur. For example, one is somewhat surprised at the wickedness of different characters who present themselves to Christian after the journey is almost terminated, and who, according to the leading idea of the work, that Christianity is a pilgrimage, could hardly have been expected to have advanced so far in their progress.

It is difficult to give any specimen of this popular allegory, as its merit consists less in the beauty of detached passages, than in almost irresistibly carrying on the reader to that goal which is the object of pursuit. The following description, however, is short, and gives a favourable idea of the author's powers of picturesque delineation:—"In this light, therefore, he came to the end of the valley. Now I saw in my dream, that at the end of this valley lay blood, bones, ashes, and mangled bodies of men, even of pilgrims that had gone this way formerly; and, while I was musing what should be the reason, I espied a little before me a cave, where two giants, Pope and Pagan, dwelt in old time, by whose power and tyranny the men, whose bones, blood, ashes, &c. lay there, were cruelly put to death. But by this place Christian went without much danger, whereat I somewhat wondered; but I have learned since,



that Pagan has been dead many a day, and as for the other, though he be alive, he is, by reason of age, and also of the many shrewd brushes that he met with in his younger days, grown so crazy and still in his joints, that he can now do little more than sit in his cave's mouth, grinning at pilgrims as they go by, and biting his nails because he cannot come at them. So I saw that Christian went on his way; yet at the sight of the old man that sat at the mouth of the cave, he could not tell what to think, especially because he spake to him, though he could not go after him, saying, 'You will never mend till more of you be burnt.' But he held his peace, and set a good face on it and went by, and caught no hurt."

Of the powerful painting in the volume, no part is superior to the description of the passage of Christian through the River of Death. The representation also of the arrival of Christian and his fellow pilgrim at the heavenly Jerusalem is very pleasing, though intermingled with traits which a good taste would have rejected. It concludes in the following manner :—

"Now I saw in my dream that these two men went in at the gate; and, lo! as they entered, they were transfigured, and they had raiment put on that shone like gold. .

“ There were also that met them with harps and crowns, and gave to them, the harps to praise withal, and the crowns in token of honour. Then I heard in my dream that all the bells in the city rang again for joy, and that it was said unto them, ‘ Enter ye into the joy of your Lord.’ I also heard the men themselves sing with a loud voice, saying, ‘ Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be to him that sitteth upon the throne, and the Lamb, for ever and ever.’

“ Now, just as the gates were opened to let in the men, I looked in after them, and behold the city shone like the sun ; the streets also were paved with gold, and in them walked many men with crowns upon their heads, palms in their hands, and golden harps to sing praises withal.

“ There were also of them that had wings, and they answered one another without intermission, saying, ‘ Holy, holy, holy is the Lord.’ And after that, they shut up the gates ; which, when I had seen, I wished myself amongst them.”

The emblematic representation of heavenly joys under figure of a magnificent city, so frequent in spiritual romance, probably originated in a scriptural similitude, which was readily adopted by the monks and anchorites of the early ages. It was natural enough for men, who were clad in

hair-cloth, and who dwelt in solitary caverns or gloomy cells, to imagine that supreme bliss consisted in walking in parade, attired with glittering garments, through streets which shone like gold: But though this occupation may be better than quaffing Hydromel in Valhalla, to us it is scarcely so attractive as the Arabian Paradise, or the *Loca læta et amœna vircta* of a Platonic Elysium.

## CHAPTER X.

*Comic Romance.*—*Works of Rabelais.*—*Vita di Bertoldo.*—*Don Quixote.*—*Gusman d'Alfarache.*—*Marcos de Obregon.*—*Roman Comique, &c.*—*Political Romance.*—*Utopia.*—*Argenis.*—*Sethos, &c.*

ALL men have, more or less, a propensity to satire and ridicule. This tendency has its origin in self-love, which naturally leads us to indulge in a belief of our own superiority over the rest of our species. It is in satire and ridicule that this feeling receives its most frequent gratification ; and, spite of the objections of Beattie, nothing can, in many instances, be more just than the reflection of Addison on the well-known theory of Hobbes, that when a man laughs he is not very merry, but very proud.

But, besides the gratification they afford, works of satire and ridicule are useful, as they frequently exhibit mankind in their true light and just pro-

portions, with all their passions and follies. They remove from their conduct that varnish with which men so ingeniously cover those actions which are frequently the offspring of pride, private views, or voluntary self-delusion.

In nothing is the superiority of the moderns over the ancients more apparent than in the higher excellence of their ludicrous compositions. Modern ridicule, as has been shown by Dr Beattie, is at once more copious, and more refined, than the ancient. Many sources of wit and humour, formerly unknown, are now open and obvious, and those which are common to all ages have been purified by improvement in courtesy and taste.

### RABELAIS,

whom Sir William Temple has styled the Father of Ridicule, is certainly the first modern author who obtained much celebrity by the comic or satirical romance. At the time when he appeared, extravagant tales were in the height of their popularity. As he had determined to ridicule the most distinguished persons, and every thing that the rest of mankind regarded as venerable or important, he clothed his satire somewhat in the

form of the lying stories of the age, that under this veil he might be sheltered from the resentment of those whom he intended to deride. By this means he probably conceived that his work would, at the same time, obtain a favourable reception from the vulgar, who, though they should not discover his secret meaning, might be entertained with fantastic stories which bore some resemblance to those to which they were accustomed.

With this view, Rabelais availed himself of the writings of those who had preceded him in satirical romance, and imitated in particular the True History of Lucian. His stories he borrowed chiefly from previous facetiae and novellettes: Thus the story of Hans Carvel's ring, of which Fontaine believed him the inventor, is one of the Facetiae of Poggio, and entitled *Annulus, or Visio Francisci Philelphi*. With an intention of adding to the diversion of the reader, he has given a mixture of burlesque and barbarous words from the Greek and Latin, a notion which was perhaps suggested by the *Liber Macaronicorum* of Teofilo Folengi, published under name of *Merlinus Coccaius*, about twenty years before the appearance of the work of Rabelais. An infinite number of puns and quibbles have also been introduced amongst the more ingenious conceptions of the author. In

short, his romance may be considered as a mixture, or olio, of all the merry, satirical, and comic modes of writing that had been employed previous to the age in which he wrote.

There are four things which Rabelais seems principally to have proposed to ridicule in his work: 1. The refined and crooked politics of the period in which he lived. 2. The vices of the clergy, the Romish superstitions, and the religious controversies at that time agitated. 3. The lying and extravagant tales then in vogue. 4. The pedantry and philosophical jargon of the age.

But although it be understood that these in general were the objects of the author, the application of a great part of the satire is unknown. Works of wit and humour, unless they allude to permanent follies, in which case their relish may remain unimpaired, are more subject to the ravages of time, and more liable to become obscure, than any other literary compositions, because the propriety of allusion cannot be estimated when the customs and incidents referred to are forgotten: We must be acquainted with the likeness before we can relish the caricature. "Those modifications of life," says Dr Johnson, "and peculiarities of practice, which are the progeny of error and perverseness, or at best of some accidental influ-

ence, or transient impression, must perish with their parents." To us who are unacquainted with the follies and impieties of the Greek sophists, nothing can appear more wretched than the ridicule with which these pretended philosophers were persecuted by Aristophanes, yet it is said to have acted with wonderful effect among a people distinguished for wit and refinement of taste. The humour, which in *Hudibras* transported the age which gave it birth with merriment, is lost, in a great degree, to a posterity unaccustomed to puritanical moroseness.

No satirical writings have suffered more by lapse of time than those of Rabelais; for, besides being in a great measure confined to temporary and local subjects, he was obliged to write with ambiguity, on account of the delicate matters of which he treated, the arbitrary and persecuting spirit of the age and country in which he lived, and the multitude of enemies by whom he was surrounded. Accordingly, even to those who are most minutely acquainted with the political transactions and ecclesiastical history of the sixteenth century, there will be many things from which no meaning can be deciphered, and to most readers the works of Rabelais must appear a mass of unintelligible extravagance. The advantages which he formerly



derived from temporary opinions, personal allusions, and local customs, have long been lost, and every topic of merriment which the modes of artificial life afforded, now only "obscure the page which they once illumined." Even the outline of the story, with which Rabelais has chosen to surround his satire, has furnished matter of dispute, and commentators are not agreed what persons are intended by the two chief characters, Gargantua and Pantagruel. Thus it has been said by some writers, that Gargantua is Francis I. and Pantagruel Henry II., while, in fact, there is not one circumstance in the lives, nor one feature in the characters, of these French princes, which appears to correspond with the actions or dispositions of the imaginary heroes of Rabelais.

Other critics have supposed that Grangousier, the father of Gargantua, is John D'Albret, king of Navarre; Gargantua, Henry D'Albret, son and successor of John; Pantagruel, Anthony Bourbon, duke of Vendosme, who was father to Henry IV., and by his marriage with Jean D'Albret, the daughter of Henry D'Albret, succeeded his father-in-law in the throne of Navarre. Picrochole, according to this explication, is king of Spain, either Ferdinand of Arragon, or Charles V. Panurge, the companion of Pantagruel, who is the

secondary hero of the work, is said to be John de Montluc, bishop of Valence, who, like Panurge, was well versed in ancient and modern languages; like him, penetrating and deceitful; like him, professed the popish religion, while he despised its superstitions, and owed, like Panurge, his elevation to the family of Navarre. That want of accordance, which exists in many particulars between the real characters and the delineations of Rabelais, and which is the great cause of the intricacy of the subject, arises from individuals in the work being made to represent two or more persons, whose aggregate qualities and adventures are thus concentrated in one. On the other hand, the author often subdivides an integral history, so that the same individual is represented under different names. Nor does he confine himself to the order of chronology, but frequently joins together events which followed each other at long intervals.

Holding this in view, it will be found that the commentators who have adopted the above-mentioned key, explain more successfully than could have been expected the meaning and tendency of the five books of Rabelais.

The first is occupied chiefly with the life of Gargantua. An absurd and disgusting carousal of

his father Grangousier ridicules the debaucheries of John D'Albret, which often consisted in going privately to eat and drink immoderately at the houses of his meanest subjects. The account of the manner in which Gargantua, or Henry D'Albret, was brought up, corresponds with the mode in which we are informed by historians the young princes of Navarre passed their childhood, especially Henry IV., whom his grandfather inured in his tender age to all sorts of hardship. After some time Gargantua is sent to Paris, and put under the tuition of a pedant called Holofernes, whence Shakspeare has probably taken the name of his pedantic character in *Love's Labour's Lost*. The education of Gargantua is a satire on the tedious and scholastic mode of instruction which was then in use, and is, at the same time, expressive of the little improvement derived by Henry D'Albret from popish tuition, while the progress Gargantua afterwards made in every science under the care of Ponocrates, points out the benefit derived by the prince of Navarre from his protestant teachers, to whose religion he was ardently, though secretly, attached. Gargantua called from Paris to defend his own country, which had been invaded by the Truans, alludes to the wars between the house of D'Albret and the Spaniards—

*truand* signifying idle or lazy, which the French imagined to be the character of that people.

Book second commences with a detail of the pedigree of Pantagruel, which the author deduces from the giants, a satire on the family pride of some of the princes of Navarre. Next follow the wonderful feats he performed in his childhood, and then his youthful expedition to Paris. In this excursion he meets with a Limousin, who addresses him in a pedantic and unintelligible jargon, by which Rabelais mocks the writers of the age, who stuffed their compositions with Latin terms, to which they gave a French inflection. Pantagruel arrives at Paris, and enters on his studies. The catalogue of the books in St Victor's library, the names of which are partly real and partly fictitious, is meant as a sarcasm on those who form a collection of absurd works. Pantagruel makes such proficiency in his studies, that he is appointed umpire in an important cause, in which the incoherent nonsense of the pleadings of the parties, and Pantagruel's unintelligible decision, are a satire on the judicial proceedings of the age, particularly those that took place in the trial concerning the domains possessed by the Constable of Bourbon, and which were claimed by Louisa of Savoy, mother of Francis I.

During his stay at Paris, Pantagruel meets with Panurge, who continues to be a leading character through the remainder of the work, and attends Pantagruel in his expedition against the Dipsodes, who had laid waste a great part of his territory. The Dipsodes are the Flemings, and other subjects of Charles V., who invaded Picardy and the adjacent districts, of which Anthony of Bourbon was governor ; and the real issue of that war is enigmatically pointed out towards the end of the second book, by the discomfiture of the three hundred giants.

Panurge is the principal character through the whole of the third book. His mind is represented as fluctuating between the desire of entering into a matrimonial engagement and the fear of repenting his choice. To dispel his doubts he consults certain persons, who, by magical skill, could relieve mental anxiety by prediction of the future : in particular, he applies to Raminogrobis, an aged poet, then in the last moments of his existence, who is intended for Cretin, an author almost as much celebrated in his own day as he has been neglected by posterity. The last person of whom he asks advice puts into his hands an empty bottle, which Panurge interprets to imply that he should

undertake a voyage for the purpose of obtaining a response from the oracle of the Holy Bottle.

The fourth and fifth books are occupied with the expedition of Panurge, accompanied by Pantagruel, in quest of the oracle. This voyage is said to signify a departure from the World of Error to search after Truth, which the author places in a bottle, in consequence of the proverbial effects of intoxication. These two books are considered as the most entertaining part of the work, as the satire is more general and obvious than in those by which they are preceded.

In the account of this voyage, the author, according to the expression of Thuanus, *omnes hominum ordines deridendos propinavit*. Each island, which his characters pass, or on which they disembark, is made the vehicle of new ridicule. Thus, the first place touched at is the island of Medamothi (No where), and in the account of the rarities with which this country abounds, the improbable fictions of travellers are ridiculed. In another island the author paints the manners of bailiffs and other inferior officers of justice. Leaving this archipelago of absurdity, the vessel of Panurge and Pantagruel is nearly wrecked in a storm, which typifies the persecution raised in France against the Hugonots, and the land where the ship went into

port after the tempest, is the British dominions, which formed a safe harbour from the violence of popish persecution. Here the ruins of obelisks and temples, and vestiges of ancient monuments, denote the abolition of the monasteries which had recently been effected. The last place at which Pantagruel and Panurge arrive is Lanternland, or the Land of Learning, inhabited by professors of various arts and sciences. Our voyagers beseech the queen of this country to grant them a lantern to light and conduct them to the oracle of the Holy Bottle. Their request being complied with, they are guided by the lantern, that is, the light of learning, to the spot which they so vehemently desired to reach. On arriving in the country where the oracle was situated, they, in the first place, pass through an extensive vineyard. At the end of this vineyard, being still preceded by the lantern, they come through a vault, to the porch of a magnificent temple. The architecture of this building is splendidly described, and mysteries have, of course, been discovered by commentators in the account of the component parts. Its gates spontaneously open, after which the perspicuous lantern takes leave, and consigns the strangers to the care of Bacbuc, priestess of the temple. Under her escort they view a beautiful represen-

tation of the triumphs of Bacchus, the splendid lamp by which the temple is illuminated, and the miraculous fountain of water, which had the taste of wine. Finally, Panurge is conducted through a golden gate to a round chapel formed of transparent stones, in the middle of which stood a heptagonal fountain of alabaster, containing the oracular bottle, which is described as being of fine crystal, and of an oval shape. The priestess throws something into the fount, on which the water begins to bubble, and the word *Trine* is heard to proceed from the bottle, which the priestess declares to be the most auspicious response pronounced while she had officiated at the oracle. This term she explains to be equivalent to *Drink*, and as the goddess had directed her votary to the divine liquor, she presents him with Falernian wine in a goblet. The priestess having also partaken with her guests, raves and prophesies, and all being inspired with Bacchanalian enthusiasm, the romance concludes with a *tirade* of obscene and impious verses.

Few writers have been more reviled and extolled than Rabelais; he has been highly applauded by De Thou, but bitterly attacked by the poet Ronsard, and also by Calvin, who thought to have made



a convert of him. Subsequent critics are equally at variance: Boileau has called him *La Raison habillée en Masque*, while Voltaire, in his *Temple de Gout*, pronounces, that all the sense and wit of Rabelais may be comprised in three pages, and that the rest of the work is a mass of incoherent absurdity.

We are informed by Pasquier, in his *Letters*, (l. 1.) that Rabelais had two unsuccessful imitators.—One under the name of Leon L'Adulfy, in his *Propos Rustiques*, and the other, anonymous, in a work entitled *Les Fanfreluches. Le Moyen de Parvenir*, by Beroalde de Verville, is the work which bears, I think, the closest resemblance to that of Rabelais. The author professes himself an imitator of the father of comic romance, but the disorder that pervades his work is greater than in the romance of his predecessor. Like Athenæus, he introduces a company conversing together at random on various topics, and a number of jests and tales in the manner of Rabelais are thus thrown together at hazard, but there is no leading character or story by which they are in any way connected. We are told in the *Menagiana* that the best of these tales may be found, in form of question and answer, at the end of a MS. in the old

language of Picardy, entitled *Les Evangiles des Quenouilles*, and which is different from the printed edition of that production.

In chronological order, the next comic romance, subsequent to the work of Rabelais, is the

### VITA DI BERTOLDO,

written in Italian towards the end of the 16th century by Julio Cesare Croce, surnamed *Della Lyra*, because he dignified with this appellation the violin on which he scraped in the streets of Bologna.

I know of scarcely any celebrated novel or romance which exhibits the rise of the principal character from a low rank to a distinguished fortune by the force of talents. *The Life of Bertoldo*, however, describes the elevation of a peasant to the highest situation in his country, by a species of grotesque humour, and a singular ingenuity in extricating himself from the difficulties into which he is thrown by the malice of his enemies.

This romance is borrowed from the eastern story of Solomon and Marcolphus, which is one of the many oriental traditions concerning the Jew-

ish monarch. It appeared in a metrical form in the French language in the 13th century ; in Latin in the year 1488 ; and in English under the title of Sayings and Proverbs of Solomon, with the answers of Marcolphus. The *Life of Bertoldo*, however, which is the Italian form of this fiction, is the most popular shape it has assumed. Indeed, in the country in which it appeared, it enjoyed, for more than two centuries, reputation equal to that of Robinson Crusoe, or the Pilgrim's Progress, in this island : the children had it by heart, and the nurses related it to those who had not yet learned to read. Innumerable sayings or proverbs derived from it are still in the mouths of the few who have never perused or forgotten it, as *la pace di Marcolfa*, the wife of the hero, who habitually quarrelled with her husband for the sake of the reconciliation.

We are told, near the beginning of this work, that in the sixth century King Alboino reigned over Lombardy in his capital of Verona. At the same time there lived, in a small village in the neighbourhood, a peasant called Bertoldo, of a strange and ludicrous aspect. His large head was round as a foot-ball, and garnished with short red hair ; he had two little blear eyes, fringed with scarlet ; a flat broad nose ; a mouth from ear to

ear, and a person corresponding to the charms of his countenance.

But the deformity of Bertoldo's appearance was compensated by the acuteness and solidity of his understanding. His neighbours preferred his moral instructions to those of their pastor; he adjusted their differences more to their satisfaction, than the lord of the territory or the judge, and he made them laugh more heartily than the mountebanks, who occasionally passed through the village.

One day Bertoldo took a longing to see the court and capital. On entering Verona, he observed two women disputing on the street, about the property of a mirror, and followed them to the hall of audience, whither they were summoned to receive the judgment of the king, who had overheard their quarrel. The singularity of Bertoldo's figure, and his presumption in chusing a seat reserved for the chief courtiers, attracted the monarch's attention, whose curiosity was farther excited by the singular answers he returned to the first questions concerning his situation in life, his age, and residence. His majesty, in consequence, persisted in a series of interrogatories; he asked which is the best wine? "That which we drink at the expence of another." "Who caresses us

most?" "He who has already deceived us, or intends to do so,"—an idea that has been expressed by Ariosto:

*Chi mi fa piu carezze che non suole,  
O m' ingannato o ingannar mi vuole.*

Bertoldo now listened to the pleadings in the cause concerning the mirror. The king ordered it to be broken in two, and divided between the disputants. She of the parties who opposed this arrangement, and prayed that it might be given entire to her adversary, had the whole bestowed on her. The courtiers applauded this happy application of the judgment of Solomon; but Bertoldo pointed out those specialties of the case, from which he conceived that that decision ought not to be held as a precedent, and concluded with some satirical reflections on the fair sex, to which the king replied in a studied eulogy. These sarcasms, and a device by no means ingenious, to which he had recourse, in order to convince the king that his majesty entertained too favourable an opinion, induced the queen to avenge the injury offered to those of her sex. On pretence of rewarding Bertoldo, she sent for him to her apartments. "What a ridiculous figure you are," remarked her majesty: "Such as it is," replied Bertoldo, "I

have it from nature—I neither mend my shape nor counterfeit a complexion.” Perceiving that the queen, and the ladies who attended her, were provided with switches, and thence suspecting their hostile intentions, he informed them, that, being somewhat of a sorcerer, he was not only aware of their designs, but foresaw that she would give the first blow, who had least regard to her own and her husband’s honour. Bertoldo escaped unhurt by this device, which is similar to that in the 39th of the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, (see above, vol. II. p. 217.)

The drollery of Bertoldo excited the jealousy of Fagotti, who had been long the unrivalled buffoon of the court. The author relates a number of absurd questions, which Fagotti put with the view of exposing his enemy, and the triumphant answers of our hero.—“How would you carry water in a sieve?” “I would wait till it was frozen.” “When could you catch a hare without running?” “When it is on the spit.” These, and many other repartees of Bertoldo, correspond with stories told of Bahalul, surnamed Al Megnun, the court fool of Haroun Alraschid. (D’Herbelot, *Bib. Orient. Bahalul*.)

About this time Bertoldo’s old foes, the court ladies, insisted on admission into the councils of

state. His majesty was somewhat embarrassed by the application, till, by advice of Bertoldo, he appeared to acquiesce in the demand, and sent a box to the wife of the prime minister, desiring her to keep it in the garden till next day, when the ladies and ministers were to deliberate on its contents. The minister's wife opened it from curiosity, and the bird which was inclosed flew off. She thus demonstrated how ill qualified the fair sex were to be intrusted with secrets of state.

The ladies resolved to be avenged on Bertoldo, for the disappointment they had sustained by his means. He was a second time summoned to the queen's apartments, but, before proceeding thither, he put two live hares in his pocket. On his way it was necessary to cross a court, which was guarded by two monstrous dogs, purposely unchained. Bertoldo occupied their attention by setting loose the two hares, and, while the dogs were engaged in the chase, he arrived safe in the apartments of the queen, to the utter mortification of her majesty and her attendants.

Perceiving that Bertoldo eluded all stratagem, the queen insisted that he should be hanged without farther ceremony, to which the king readily consented. Our hero acceded to this proposal with less reluctance than could have been ex-

pected, but stipulated that he should be allowed to chuse the tree on which he was to expiate his offences. He was accordingly sent forth, escorted by the officers of justice and the executioner, in order to make his election, but cavilled at every tree which was recommended to his notice, —an incident which occurs in the original Solomon and Marcolphus. During this search Bertoldo made himself so agreeable to the guards, by his pleasant stories, that they allowed him to escape, and he returned to his native village.

Her majesty afterwards repented of her cruelty, and, on being informed that Bertoldo was still alive, she requested that he might be recalled to court. With a good deal of difficulty he was persuaded to return, and was made a privy counsellor. Owing, however, to the change in his mode of life, he did not long survive his elevation.

I have given this abstract of the Life of Bertoldo, not on account of its merit, but celebrity; and, because it formed for two hundred years the chief literary amusement of one of the most interesting countries in Europe. It is unnecessary, however, to enlarge on the life of the son Bertoldino, written by the author of Bertoldo, but added a long while after his first composition, or on that of the



grandson Cacasenno, by Camillo Scaliger della Fratta. These works never attained the same popularity as their original, and are inferior to it in point of merit. The same king who had patronized Bertoldo, believing that talents were hereditary, brought the son to court, where he became as noted for folly and absurdity, as his father had been for shrewdness, and was speedily sent back in disgrace to his village. His majesty, not satisfied with one experiment, sent for the grandson, who proved a glutton and poltroon, and the incidents of the history hinge on the exhibition of his bad qualities.

The lives of these three peasants form the subject of a much-esteemed Italian poem, which was written in the end of the 17th, or commencement of the 18th century, under the following circumstances. Joseph Maria Crespi, a celebrated artist of Bologna, executed a series of paintings, illustrative of the adventures of Bertoldo and his descendants, in which the figures of the principal characters were delineated with infinite spirit. From his pictures a set of engravings was taken by a Bolognese artist, and, instead of publishing a new edition of the prose romance, in which these might have been introduced, several wits of Italy conceived the notion of making Bertoldo

and his family the heroes of a poem, in what the Italians call the *Genere Bernesche*, from Berni its inventor, which is somewhat of a higher tone than the French burlesque, but lower than our satire. This composition was divided into twenty cantos: Each member of the association wrote a canto, except three of the number; one of whom gave arguments in verse, another furnished an allegory, and the last appended learned annotations. The work was printed at Bologna in 1736, with all the decorations which accompany the finest Italian poems, and had soon a wonderful success. It was translated into the Bolognese and Venetian dialects, and a vocabulary of each of these jargons was appended to the editions 1746 and 1747. It has also been versified in modern Greek.

By far the most celebrated romance of the class with which we are at present engaged, is the *Life and Exploits of*

### DON QUIXOTE,

which first appeared in the beginning of the 17th century, a few years posterior to the composition of the *Life of Bertoldo*.

At a time when the spirit of practical knight-

errantry was extinguished, but the rage for the perusal of relations of chivalrous extravagance continued unabated, Cervantes undertook to ridicule the vitiated taste of his countrymen, and particularly, it is said, of the duke of Lerma, whose head was intoxicated with the fictions of romance. His work accordingly is not intended, as some have imagined, to expose the quest of adventures, the eagerness for which had ceased not only at the time in which Cervantes wrote, but in which Don Quixote is feigned to have existed. Indeed, if this had not been supposed, the merit of the work would be diminished, as a considerable portion of the ridicule arises from the singularity of the hero's undertaking. Don Quixote, therefore, was written with the intention of deriding the folly of those, whose time, to the neglect of other studies and employments, was engrossed with the fabrication or perusal of romantic compositions. The author indeed informs us in his prologue, that his object was, "deribar la maquina mal fundada de los libros caballerescos, y deshacer la auto-ridad y cabida que tenian en el mundo y en el vulgo."

With this view the Spanish author, as all the world knows, has represented a man of amiable disposition, and otherwise of sound understand-

ing, whose brain had become disordered by the constant and indiscriminate perusal of romances of chivalry; a fiction by no means improbable, as this is said to be frequently the fate of his countrymen towards the close of their days:—"Sur la fin de ses jours Mendoza devint furieux, comme font d'ordinaire les Espagnols," (*Thuanæ*, &c.). The imagination of Don Quixote was at length so bewildered with notions of enchantments and single combats, that he received as truth the whole system of chimeras of which he read, and fancied himself called on to roam through the world in quest of adventures with his horse and arms, both for the general good, and the advancement of his own reputation. In the course of his errantry, which is laid in La Mancha and Arragon, the most familiar objects and occurrences appear to his dis-tempered imagination clothed in the veil of magic and chivalry, and formed with those romantic proportions to which he was accustomed in his favourite compositions: and if at any time what he had thus transformed, flash on his understanding in its true and natural colours, he imagines this real appearance all delusion, and a change accomplished by malevolent enchanters, who were envious of his fame, and wished to deprive him of the glory of his adventures.

These two principles of belief form the basis of the work, and, by their influence, the hero is conducted through a long series of comical and fantastic incidents, without entertaining the remotest suspicion of the wisdom or propriety of his undertaking. In all his adventures he is accompanied by a squire, in whom the mixture of credulity and acuteness forms, in the opinion of many, the most amusing part of the composition : indeed, if laughter, as has been said by some persons, arise from the view of things incongruous united in the same assemblage, nothing can be more happy than the striking and multifarious contrasts exhibited between Sancho and his master. The presence of the squire being essential to the work, his attendance on the knight is secured by the promise of the government of an island, and the good luck of actually finding some pieces of gold on the Sierra Morena. At length, one of Don Quixote's friends, with the intention of forcing him to return to his own village, assumes the disguise of a knight, attacks and overthrows him ; and, according to the conditions of the rencounter, insists on his retiring to his home, and abstaining for a twelvemonth from any chivalrous exploit. This period Don Quixote resolves to pass as a shepherd, and ~~lays~~ down an absurd plan of rural existence,

which, though written by the author of *Galatea*, is certainly meant as a satire on pastoral compositions, which, in the time of Cervantes, began to divide the palm of popularity with romances of chivalry.

In the work of Cervantes there is great novelty of plan, and a species of gratification is presented to the reader, which is not afforded in any previous composition. We feel infinite pleasure in first beholding the objects as they are in reality, and afterwards as they are metamorphosed by the imagination of the hero. From the nature of the plan, however, the author was somewhat circumscribed in the number of his principal characters; but, as Milton has contrived to double his *dramatis personæ*, by representing our first parents in a state of perfect innocence, and afterwards of sin and disgrace, Cervantes has in like manner assigned a double character to Don Quixote, who is a man of good sense and information, but irrational on subjects of chivalry. Sancho, too, imbibes a different disposition, when under the influence of his master's frenzy, from that given him by nature. The other characters who intervene in the action are represented under two appearances,—that which they possess in reality, and that which they assume in Don Quixote's imagination.

The great excellence, however, of the work of Cervantes, lies in the readiness with which the hero conceives, and the gravity with which he maintains, the most absurd and fantastic ideas, but which always bear some analogy to the adventures in romances of chivalry. In order to place particular incidents of these fables in a ludicrous point of view, they were most carefully perused and studied by Cervantes. The Spanish romances, however, seem chiefly to have engaged his attention, and *Amadis de Gaul* appears to have been used as his text. Indeed, there are so many allusions to romances of chivalry, and so much of the amusement arises from the happy imitation of these works, and the ridiculous point of view in which the incidents that compose them are placed, that I cannot help attributing some affectation to those, who, unacquainted with this species of writing, pretend to possess a lively relish for the adventures of *Don Quixote*. It is not to be doubted, however, that a considerable portion of the pleasure which we feel in the perusal of *Don Quixote*, is derived from the delineation of the scenery with which it abounds—the magnificent sierras—romantic streams and delightful vallies of a land which seems as it were the peculiar region of romance, from Cordoba to Roncesvalles. There is

also in the work a happy mixture of the stories and names of the Moors, a people who, in a wonderful degree, impress the imagination and affect the heart, in consequence of their grandeur, gallantry, and misfortunes ; and partly, perhaps, from the many plaintive ballads in which their achievements and fate are recorded.

Of the work of Cervantes, the first part is, I think, incontestibly the best. In the second we feel hurt and angry at the cruelty of the deceptions practised by the duke and duchess on Don Quixote ; and surely, the chimerical conceptions which spontaneously arise in his mind from the view of natural objects, are more entertaining than those which are forced on it by artificial combination, and the instrumentality of others.

The first part of Don Quixote was given to the world in 1605, and the second in 1615. In the interval between these two periods, in the year 1614, and while Cervantes was preparing for the press, an author who assumed the name of Avellaneda published at Tarragona his continuation of the first part of Don Quixote. This is the work which is so frequently mentioned and reviled in the second part by Cervantes, especially in the preface ; yet so little is this production known, that many have supposed that Cervantes only com-



bated a phantom of his own imagination. Some personal quarrel had probably existed between these authors, as the preface of Avelleneda contains not only much unfair criticism on the writings of his enemy, but a vast deal of personal abuse: he reminds him that he is now as old as the castle of San Cervantes, and so churlish that no friend will furnish his works with commendatory sonnets, which he is in consequence obliged to borrow from Prester John. The only apology, he continues, for the absurdities of the first part of *Don Quixote* is, that it was written in prison, and must necessarily have been infected with the filth of such a residence. Cervantes probably felt that his old age, poverty, and imprisonment, were not very suitable subjects of ridicule to his countrymen; and the provocation he had received certainly justified his censure of Avelleneda in the second part of *Don Quixote*.

The work of Avelleneda, which is thus loaded with personal abuse, is also full of the most unblushing plagiarisms from Cervantes, from whom he principally differs by his incidents chiefly glancing at *Don Belianis*, instead of *Amadis de Gaul*. In the continuation by Avelleneda, *Don Quixote's* brain being anew heated by the perusal of romances, he condemns himself for his inactive life, and for

omitting the duties incumbent on him, in the deliverance of the earth from those haughty giants, who, against all right and reason, insult both knights and ladies. Discovering that Dulcinea is too reserved a princess, he resolves to be called the Loveless Knight (*Caballero Desamorado*), and to obliterate her recollection, which he justifies by the example of the Knight of the Sun, who in similar circumstances forsook *Claridiana*. At the commencement of his career, he mistakes an inn for a castle, the vintner for the constable, and a Galician wench, who corresponds to *Maritornes*, for a distressed Infanta; on entering *Saragossa* he delivers a criminal from the lash of the *alguazils*, whom he believes to be infamous and outrageous knights,—an incident evidently borrowed from the *Galley Slaves* of *Cervantes*.

On the other hand, either *Avelleda* must have privately had access to the materials of the second part of *Cervantes*, or he has been imitated in turn. Thus, in the work of *Avelleda*, we have the whole scheme of *Sancho's* government; and *Don Alvaro de Tarfo*, who encourages *Don Quixote* in his folly, by presenting him with persons dressed up as knights and giants, who come to defy him from all quarters of the globe, corresponds to the duke in the second part of *Cervantes*.

The two works are on the whole pretty much in the same tone ; but we are told in the prefaces to the Spanish editions and French translations of Avelleneda, that in the peninsula he is generally thought to have surpassed Cervantes in the delineation of the character of Sancho, which, as drawn by Cervantes, is supposed to be a little inconsistent, since he sometimes talks like a guileless peasant, and at other times as an arch and malicious knave. The Don Quixote, too, of Avelleneda never displays the good sense which the hero of Cervantes occasionally exhibits, and in his madness is more absurd and fantastical, especially when he indulges in visions of what is about to happen :—"I will then draw near the giant, and without ceremony say, Proud giant, I will fight you on condition the conqueror cut off the vanquished enemy's head. All giants being naturally haughty, he will accept the condition, and he will come down from his chariot, and mount a white elephant led by a little dwarf, his squire, who, riding a black elephant, carries his lance and buckler. Then we shall commence our career, and he will strike my armour, but not pierce it, because it is enchanted ; he will then utter a thousand blasphemies against heaven, as is the custom of giants," &c. &c. Of this work of Avelleneda,

there is a French paraphrastical translation, attributed to Le Sage, from which Baker's English translation was formed. In Le Sage's version there are many interpolations, one of which is a story introduced in Pope's *Essay on Criticism* :

“ Once on a time *La Mancha's* knight, they say,  
A certain bard encountering on the way,” &c.

The catastrophe is also totally changed. In the French work *Don Quixote* is shot in a scuffle, whereas in the Spanish original he is shut up in a mad-house at Toledo by Don Alvaro de Tarfo, who had contributed so much to the increase of his phrenzy.

Le Sage is also the reputed author of a sequel of the genuine *Don Quixote*, in which there are introduced a number of Spanish stories, and the adventures of Sancho after his master's death.

A work of the popularity of *Don Quixote* could not fail to produce numerous imitations. Of these, by far the most distinguished is *Hudibras*, the hero of which is a presbyterian justice, who, accompanied by a clerk of the sect of Independants, ranges the country in the rage of zealous ignorance, with the view of correcting abuses and repressing superstition. But much closer imitations have appeared in a more recent period. In *Pharsamon*

ou les Nouvelles folies Romanesques, the earliest work of the celebrated Marivaux, and the Sir Launcelot Greaves of Smollet, the heroes are struck with the same species of phrenzy with Don Quixote, which makes the resemblance too striking. In other imitations, a different species of madness is represented. Thus, in the Female Quixote, by Mrs Lennox, published in 1752, which is a satire on the romances of the school of Gomberville and Scuderi, the heroine is a lady of rank and amiable qualities, but, being brought up by her father in perfect seclusion, and accustomed to the constant perusal of such works as Clelia and Artamenes, she at length believes in the reality of their incidents, and squares her conduct to their fantastical representations. She fancies that every man is secretly in love with her, and lives in continual apprehension of being forcibly carried off. Her father's gardener she supposes to be a person of sublime quality in disguise; she also asks a waiting-maid to relate her lady's adventures, which happened to be of a nature not fit to be talked of, and discards a sensible lover, because she finds him deficient in the code of gallantry prescribed in her favourite compositions.

In the Berger Extravagant of Sorel, pastoral romance is ridiculed on a similar system: but per-

haps the most agreeable imitation of Don Quixote, is the History of Sylvio de Rosalva, by the German poet Wieland. In the beginning of last century, the taste for fairy tales had become as prevalent, particularly in France, as that for romances of chivalry had been in Spain a century before. This passion Wieland undertook to ridicule: Sylvio de Rosalva, the hero of his romance, is a young gentleman of the province of Andalusia, who, having read nothing but tales of fairies, believed at last in the existence of these chimerical beings. Accidentally finding in a wood the miniature of a beautiful woman, he supposes it to be the representation of a spell-bound princess, predestined to his arms by the fairy Radiante, under whose protection he conceives himself placed. Most of the adventures occur in the search of this visionary mistress, whom he imagines to have been transformed into a blue butterfly, by a malevolent fairy, because she had declined an alliance with her nephew, the Green Dwarf. He is at length received at the castle of Lirias, of which the possessor had a sister residing with him. Here he discovers that the miniature had been dropped by that lady, and that it had been done for her grandmother when at the age of sixteen. He is cured of his whims by this circumstance, and by the arguments

of his friends, especially of the young lady, of whom he becomes deeply enamoured, and whose beauty the disenchanted enthusiast at length prefers to the imaginary charms which he had so long pursued. The leading incident of the picture is taken from the story of Seyfel Molouk, in the Persian Tales, where a prince of Egypt falls in love with a portrait, which, after spending his youth in search of the original, he discovers to be a miniature of a daughter of the king of Chahbal, a princess who was contemporary with Solomon, and had herself been the mistress of that great prophet. (See also Bahar-Danush, c. 35.) In other respects the work of Wieland is a complete imitation of Don Quixote. Pedrillo, the attendant of Sylvio, is a character much resembling Sancho : he has the same love of proverbs, and the same sententious loquacity. Nothing can be worse judged, than so close an imitation of a work of acknowledged merit ; at every step we are reminded of the prototype, and where actual beauties might be otherwise remarked, we only remember the excellence of the original, and the inferiority of the imitation. Sometimes, however, the German author has almost rivalled that solemn absurdity of argument, which constitutes the chief entertainment in the dialogues of the knight of La

Mancha with his squire. "Pedrillo," said Don Sylvio, "I am greatly deceived, or we are now in the palace of the White Cat, who is a great princess, and a fairy at the same time. Now, if the sylphid with whom thou art acquainted belong to this palace, very probably the fairy thou sawest yesterday is the White Cat herself."

The story of Prince Biribinquer, however, is a part of the plan peculiar to Wieland. It is an episodical narrative, compiled from the most extravagant adventures of well-known fairy tales, and is related to Don Sylvio by one of his friends, for the purpose of restoring him to common sense, by too outrageous a demand on his credulity.

The resemblance between the incidents in Sylvio de Rosalva and the adventures of Don Quixote, has led me away from the chronological arrangement of the comic romances, to which I now return.

About the period of the publication of Don Quixote, the Spaniards, whose works of fiction fifty years before were entirely occupied with Soldans of Babylon and Emperors of Trebizond, entertained themselves chiefly with the adventures of their swindlers and beggars. All works of the 16th century, which treat of the Spanish cha-



racter and manners, particularly the Letters of Clenardus,<sup>1</sup> represent, in the strongest colours, the indolence of the lower classes, which led them to prefer mendicity and pilfering to the exercise of any trade or profession; and the ridiculous pride of those hidalgos, who, while in want of provisions and every necessary of life at home, strutted with immense whiskers, long rapiers, and ruffles without a shirt, through the streets of Madrid or Toledo. The miserable inns, the rapacity of officers of justice, and ignorance of medical practitioners, also afforded ample scope for the satire contained in the romances of this period, most of which are perhaps a little overcharged, but, like every other class of fiction, only present a highly-coloured picture of the manners of the age.

The work which first led the way to those compositions which were written in the *Gusto Picaresco*, as it has been called, was the *Lazaro de Tormes*, attributed to Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, who, as governor of Sienna and ambassador to the

<sup>1</sup> Nic. Clenardi. *Epist. lib. duo*. These are letters addressed to his friends in Holland and Germany by a Dutch scholar, who visited Spain in the middle of the 16th century for the purpose of making researches in Arabian literature.

Pope from Spain, became the head of the imperial party in Italy during the reign of Charles V. Stern, tyrannical, and unrelenting, he was the counter-part of the Duke of Alva in his political character; but as an amatory poet, he was the most tender and elegant versifier of his country, and every line of his sonnets breathes a sigh for repose and domestic felicity. After his recall from Sienna he retired to Granada, where he wrote a history of the revolt of the Moors in that province, which, next to the work of Mariana, is the most valuable which has appeared in Spain: he also employed himself in collecting vast treasures of oriental MSS. which at his death he bequeathed to the king, and which still form the most precious part of the library of the Escorial.

Lazaro de Tormes was written by him in his youth, while studying at Salamanca, and was first printed in 1553. The hero of this work was the son of a miller, who dwelt on the banks of the Tormes. When eight years of age, he is presented by his mother as a guide to a blind beggar, whom he soon contrives to defraud of the money and provisions which were given to him by the charitable. After this he enters into the service of an ecclesiastic, who kept his victuals locked up in a chest, and a long chapter is occupied with

the various stratagems to which Lazaro resorted in order to extract from it a few crusts of bread. When in the last extremity of hunger, he leaves the ecclesiastic to serve a hidalgo of Old Castile. This new master is in such want of the necessaries of life, that Lazaro is compelled to beg for him at convents and the gates of churches, while the hidalgo hears mass, or stalks along the chief promenades with all the dignity of a Duke D'Infantado.

This work seems to have been left incomplete by its original author, but a second part has been added by H. de Luna, who in his preface says, that his chief inducement to write was the appearance of an absurd continuation, in which Lazaro was said to have been changed to a fish. In De Luna's continuation, Lazaro, having embarked for Algiers, is picked up at sea by certain fishermen, and exhibited as a sea monster through the different towns of Spain, till having at length escaped, he arrives, after experiencing some adventures, at a hermitage. The recluse by whom it was inhabited dying soon after, he equips himself in the garb of the deceased, and subsists by the contributions of the charitable in the neighbourhood,—an incident which resembles part of the history of Don Raphael in Gil Blas.

Of those Spanish romances which were composed in imitation of Lazaro de Tormes, the most celebrated is the Life of

### GUSMAN ALFARACHE,

which was written by Matthew Aleman, and was first printed in 1599, at Madrid. This impression was followed by twenty-five Spanish editions, and two French translations, one of which is by Le Sage.

Gusman Alfarache was the son of a Genoese merchant, who had settled in Spain. After the death of his father, the affairs of the family having fallen into disorder, young Gusman eloped from his mother, and commenced the career in which he met with those comical adventures, which form the subject of the romance. At a short distance from Seville, the place whence he set out, he falls in with a muleteer, with whom he lodges at different inns, the description of which gives us a very unfavourable impression of the *posadas* of Andalusia.

On his arrival at Madrid, Gusman fits himself out as a mendicant; he fixes on a station at the corner of a street, and the persons of all ranks

who pass before him, officers, judges, ecclesiastics, and courtezans, give the author an opportunity of moralizing and commenting on the manners of his countrymen, during the reign of the Austrian Philips. Our hero speedily grafts the practices of a sharper on his present vocation, and is in consequence forced to fly to Toledo, where he assumes the character of a man of fashion, and engages in various intrigues. As long as his money lasts, Gusman is well received, but when it is expended he obtains some insight into the nature of the friendship of sharpers, and the love of courtezans. He accordingly sets out for Barcelona, whence he embarks for Genoa in order to present himself to his father's relations, by whom he is very harshly treated. From Genoa he is forced to beg his way to Rome, which, it seems, is the paradise of mendicants. There he attains great perfection in his art, by studying the rules of a society into which he is admitted. Among other devices, he so happily counterfeits an ulcer, that a Roman cardinal takes him home, and has him cured. He then becomes the page of his eminence, and rises into high favour, which continues till, being detected in various thefts, he is driven from the house with disgrace. Gusman seeks refuge with the French ambassador, who,

being easily convinced of his innocence, takes him into his service. His master employs him to propitiate a Roman lady, of whom he was enamoured, but Gusman manages matters so unfortunately, that the intrigue becomes public. In despair at his bad success, Gusman asks leave to return to Spain. In his progress through Tuscany he meets with a person of the name of Saavedra, a man of similar dispositions with himself, by whom he is at first duped, but who afterwards assists him in duping others, while they pass through the different towns in the north of Italy. On his return to the capital of his native country, Gusman marries a woman with whom he expected to obtain a large fortune. This alliance proves very unfortunate; his affairs go into disorder, and after his wife's death he enters as a student at Alcala, in order to obtain a benefice.

While at this university, our hero becomes acquainted with three sisters who were great musicians, but of suspected virtue; he marries the eldest, renounces the ecclesiastical profession, and arrives with his wife at Madrid. For some time the *menage* goes on prosperously, in consequence of her beauty and accommodating disposition, but having quarrelled with an admirer of some political importance, she and her husband are banished

from Madrid, and retire to Seville, where the lady soon decamps with the captain of a Neapolitan vessel. By the interest of a Dominican confessor, Gusman is introduced into the house of an old lady, as her chamberlain, but manages the affairs intrusted to him with such villainy, that he is arrested and sent to the galleys. His fellow-slaves attempt to engage him in a plot, to deliver the vessels into the power of the corsairs. He reveals the conspiracy, and, having obtained his freedom for this service, employs himself afterwards in writing his history.

In this romance several interesting episodes are introduced. Of these, the best are the story of Osmin and Daraxa, recounted to Gusman by a fellow-traveller on the way from Seville to Madrid, and the tale which he hears related in the house of the French ambassador at Rome. The first is in the Spanish style, and describes the warm, refined, and generous gallantry, for which Granada was celebrated at the close of the 15th century. The second is in the Italian taste; and paints the dark mysterious intrigue, the black revenge, and atrocious jealousy, of which we have seen so many examples in the works of the novelists of that country, and which were not inconsistent with the disposition of the inhabitants. Another episode,

the story of Lewis de Castro, and Roderigo de Montalvo, coincides with the 41st tale of Masuccio, with *La Précaution Inutile* of Scarron, and the under-plot concerning Dinant, Cleremont, and Lamira, in Beaumont and Fletcher's comedy of *the Little French Lawyer*, (see above, vol. II. p. 394, &c.).

The frequent introduction of these episodes, is one of the circumstances in which this romance bears a resemblance to *Gil Blas*, a work of which *Gusman Alfarache* has been regarded as the model. *Gusman*, indeed, is a much greater knave than *Gil Blas*, and never attains his dignity—the pictures of manners have little resemblance, and in the Spanish work there are tiresome moral reflections on every incident, while the French author leaves the reader to draw his own conclusions from the situations in which the characters are placed. Still, however, both heroes begin by being dupes, and afterwards become knaves. The same pleasantry on the officers of justice runs through both, and the story of *Scipio*, like that of *Saavedra*, is too much chalked out after the adventures of his master.

Whether this romance has suggested any notions to the author of *Gil Blas* or not, it was at least the origin of a swarm of Spanish works concerning



the adventures of beggars, gypsies, and the lowest wretches. The *Picara Justina*, which bears the name of the licentiate Lopez de Ubeda as its author, but is generally attributed to Fra Anton Perez, seems to have been written to correspond with *Gusman d'Alfarache*. This romance, which was printed in 1605, commences, like *Jonathan Wild*, with an account of the ancestors of the heroine Justina, the daughter of an innkeeper, by whom she was early initiated into the art of imposing on passengers, and after his death continued, in various capacities, to dupe the inhabitants of Leon and the Castiles. The work is also interspersed with many moral and satirical reflections.

The *Life of Paul the Sharper*, by Quevedo, is of a similar description. It contains the history of a barber's son, who first serves a young student of quality at Alcala, which gives the author an opportunity of presenting us with some curious pictures of the manners and usages practised at that celebrated seminary of education. After Paul arrives at Madrid, the scenes described are in the lowest abyss of vice and misery. He first becomes member of a fraternity which existed by what has been called *raising the wind*. The chief incidents of the romance consist of stratagems to procure a crust of dry bread, and having eat it, to appear

with due decorum in public, by the art of fitting on a ruffle so as to suggest the idea of a shirt, and adjusting a cloak in such a manner as to make it be believed that there are clothes under it. Paul afterwards associates with a band of bravoës, and the consequences of an enterprise in which he engages oblige him to embark for the West Indies. An incident which occurs in this romance, while Paul is attending his young master at Alcala, seems to have suggested the story of the parasite, who eats the omelet of Gil Blas :—" L'ornement d'Oviedo, le flambeau de la philosophie, la huitième merveille du monde."

Indeed, in most of the Spanish romances in this style of composition, we occasionally meet with stories of which the author of Gil Blas has availed himself. But of all the works in the *Gusto Picaresco*, Le Sage has been chiefly indebted to the *Relaciones de la Vida del Escudero Marcos de Obregon* ;—not merely that the character of Gil Blas is formed on that of Obregon, but many of the incidents have been closely imitated. This work, which has been a subject of considerable curiosity in this country, was written towards the close of the 16th century by Vincent Espinel, born in 1551, and styling himself *Capellan del Rey en el Hospital de la Ciudad de Ronda*. It

was first printed in 1618; it is related in the person of the hero, and is divided into three parts or *relaciones*, which are again divided into chapters. The prologue contains a story which is nearly the same with that in the introduction to *Gil Blas*, concerning the two scholars and the soul of the licentiate Pedro Garcias. In the second chapter several anecdotes are related, as examples of composure of temper, one of which is of a gentleman who, on receiving a challenge to meet his enemy at six in the morning, said, that he never rose till mid-day for his amusement, and could not be expected to rise at six to have his throat cut,\*—an answer which is made by one of *Gil Blas*' masters, Don Mathias de Sylva, (l. 3. c. 8). We are told in the following chapter, that Marcos entered into the service of Doctor Sagredo, a man of great arrogance and loquacity, and who was as much in the practice of blood-letting as the Sangrado of Le Sage. The chief occupation of Marcos was to attend the doctor's wife, Donna Mergellina, whom he introduced to a bar-

\* Decidle a vuestro amo, que digo yo, que para cosas que me importan de mucho gusto, no me suelo levantar hasta las doce del dia: que por qué quiere que para matarme me levante tan de mañana? y volviendose del otro lado, se tornò a dormir.

ber lad of his acquaintance, and an intrigue is detailed, of which the incidents are precisely the same as those in the history of Diego the *Garçon Barbier*, in Gil Blas. Indeed Diego mentions, in the course of his relation, that the attendant of Mergellina was called Marcos Obregon. After leaving the service of the doctor and experiencing various adventures, Marcos arrives one night at a hermitage, where he recounts to the recluse the early events of his life. Having shown a taste for learning in his youth, he was sent by his father, under care of a muleteer, to Salamanca. On the way he meets with a parasite, who, by the most extravagant flattery, contrives to sup at his expence, and having satisfied his hunger, declares that there is a grandee in the neighbourhood who would give 200 ducats to see such an ornament of literature. Marcos having repaired to the house finds that the master is blind, and is jeeringly told by the parasite that the proprietor would give 200 ducats to see him or any one. In the course of the journey to Salamanca we have also a story which occurs in Gil Blas, of the amorous muleteer, who, in order to carry on an intrigue, more commodiously disperses the company in the *Posada* at Cacabelos. Instead of going to study at Salamanca, young Marcos enters into the service of the Count

of Lemos, and afterwards of the Duke Medina Sidonia. While in the employment of the latter, he embarks from the south of Spain, with other domestics of the duke, for Italy. In the course of the voyage they land at an islet near the coast of Majorca, and during their stay habitually repair to a delightful cave in a wood for pleasure and refreshment. They are warned by the governor of the island of the danger they incur by this practice, as the spot is frequently resorted to by Turkish corsairs. This notice is disregarded, and on the following day the party is attacked by pirates. Supposing that some of their friends, disguised as Turks, had merely wished to alarm them, they do not take the proper measures for defence, and are accordingly overpowered and made prisoners. Marcos is carried to Algiers, where he is sold to a master whose daughter falls in love with him. All these incidents have been literally copied in the history of Don Raphael in *Gil Blas*. Like Don Raphael, too, Marcos Obregon, on his escape from Algiers, first lands at Genoa. While at Milan a courtesan, called Camilla, contrives to elope with his baggage, and to possess herself of a valuable ring by means of the same stratagem by which *Gil Blas* is duped in the adventure of the *Hotel Garni*. From Spain Don Marcos returns to his

own country, and towards the end of the work he again meets his old master Doctor Sagredo, with whom he has a long conversation. While in his company he falls under the power of banditti, and is confined in a cave which was the haunt of these outlaws and their captain Roque Amador. During his detention in this captivity the robbers bring to the cavern a lady, who proves to be Donna Mergellina, the wife of Doctor Sagredo. With her Marcos soon after contrives to escape from the cave, and arrives in safety at Madrid. This adventure, which is the termination of the Spanish work, has been placed by Le Sage near the commencement of his entertaining, but, it must be confessed, not very original production.

Le Sage has only imitated the more polite knavery of those Spanish novels which were written in the *Gusto Picaresco*. The deeper scenes of vice and wretchedness depicted in such forcible, though not very pleasing colours, in *Paul the Sharper*, and *Lazarillo de Tormes*, form a species of sombre gaiety peculiar to the Spaniards. The works which in this country approach nearest to that taste, are, *De Foe's Bampfylde Moore Carew*, and the *Jonathan Wild* of Fielding.

It may now be proper to mention a few of the comic romances which appeared in France in the

course of the seventeenth century. They were nearly coeval with the heroic romances to be afterwards mentioned, and, like them, preceded the introduction of the modern novel; but they are not of such scarceness as to require, nor such merit as to deserve, a particular analysis. The earliest and most celebrated is Scarron's<sup>1</sup>

### ROMAN COMIQUE,

so called from its relating the adventures of a troop of comedians, or strolling players, during their residence in Mans, and its neighbourhood. The idea of writing a work of this description first occurred to the author on his arrival at Mans; to take possession of a benefice to which he had been presented. It was suggested by some striking peculiarities of local scenery, and some ludicrous incidents which happened to a company of actors who were there at the time. Nor were strollers of this description so far beneath the notice of genius and refined satire, nor were the talents of the author so misemployed, as in this age and country we may be apt to imagine. In the time of Scarron these

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, No. 2.

persons were treated with absurd attention and respect, by the families who inhabited those districts through which they passed. Their consequent extravagance and conceit provoked and merited chastisement, and was not considered undeserving the satire of such writers as Scarron and Le Sage.

The work commences with a grotesque description of the equipage of a company of strolling players, who arrive at Mans on their way to Alençon, having been forced to leave the town in which they had last performed, on account of their door-keeper having murdered an officer of the intendant of the province. They agree to act for one night in the tennis court ; but, as the whole company was not expected till the following day, a difficulty arises from the smallness of their number, which consisted of a young man, called Destin, who usually played the parts of the heroes and lovers ; Rancune, and a single actress. This objection is obviated by Rancune, who observed that he had once performed a drama alone, acting a king, queen, and ambassador, in the same scene. A second difficulty, however, occurs from one of the other division of the troop having the key of the wardrobe. M. Rappiniere, the *Lieutenant de*



*Prevot*, who had examined the strollers on their arrival, presents the actress with an old robe belonging to his wife, and the male performers are invested with the garments of two young men, who were playing a match at tennis.

In a few minutes every thing is arranged. The spectators having taken their places, a dirty sheet rises, and *Destin* is discovered in the character of *Herod*, lying on a mattress, with a basket on his head for a crown, and repeating, in the tones of *Mondori*,

*Fantome injurieux, qui troubles mon repos !<sup>1</sup>*

The actress performs the parts of *Mariamne* and *Salome*, while *Rancune* gives universal satisfaction in all the other characters of the piece. In the most interesting scene of the tragedy, however, the two young men who had now finished their

<sup>1</sup> This was the play of *Marianne*, by *Tristan L'Hermite*. *Mondori* died in consequence of the violence with which he had represented the transports of *Herod*, as *Montfleury* is said to have expired while acting the furies of *Orestes*. It was said on one of these occasions: "Il n'y aura plus de poete qui ne veuille avoir l'honneur de crever un comedien en sa vie."

match at tennis, rush on the stage to vindicate the habits worn by Herod and Phrerora. Some of the spectators espouse one part, and some another; and the tragedy concludes with distresses more real, though less heroic, than the death of Mariamne, and the despair of the Jewish monarch.

After this affray there follows an amusing account of a supper given to the actors by one of the inhabitants of Mans. On the following day the rest of the players arrive, and among others, Mad. L'Etoile, the *soi-disant* sister of Destin, and Leander, his valet, who already aspired to the first situation in the company. They continue to act for some time at Mans, and at length are invited to perform at a villa in the neighbourhood, but a short while before the entertainment commences, one of the actresses is forcibly carried off while rehearsing her part in the garden. The other performers set out in quest of her, and the second half of the work chiefly consists of the adventures they meet with in their pursuit.

Of this romance the more serious part relates to the amours of Destin and Mad. L'Etoile, and the story of Leander, who proves to be a young man of fashion, but having been captivated with the beauty of one of the actresses, he had associated himself to the strolling company. The more co-

mical portion consists in the delineation of the characters of Rancune and Ragotin, and an account of their absurdities. Of these the former, as his name imports, was noted for malice and envy. He found something to blame in every one of his own profession; Bellerose was stiff; Mondori harsh; Floridor frigid—from all which he wished it to be inferred, that he himself was the only faultless comedian. At the time when the pieces of Hardi were acted, he played the part of the nurse under a mask, and since the improvement in the drama, had performed the confidants and ambassadors. Ragotin was an attorney, who, falling in love with Mad. L'Etoile, attached himself to the company; he wrote immeasurable quantities of bad poetry, and on one occasion proposed reading to the players a work of his own composition, entitled *Les Faits et Gestes de Charlemagne en vingt quatre Journées*. A great part of the romance is occupied with the ridiculous distresses into which this absurd character falls, partly by his own folly, and partly by the malice of Rancune. These are sometimes amusing, but are generally quite extravagant, and exceed all bounds of probability.

There are also a number of episodes in the *Roman Comique*, as *L'Amante Invisible*—a *Tromp-*

sur Trompeur et Demi, &c. which bear a strong resemblance to the *Nouvelles Tragi-Comiques*, by the same author. The scene of these episodes is invariably laid in Spain; they are always declared to be translated from the language of that country, and many of them are so in fact. All of them are love stories, containing a good deal of intrigue, and terminating happily.

It is said to have been the intention of Scarron, to have added a third part to the *Roman Comique*; indeed, in its present state, it ends very abruptly, which has induced different authors to attempt to bring it to a close. One continuation, written under the fictitious name of M. Ollray, conducts the troop to Alepçon, where Ragotin undergoes disgraces equally extravagant, but less entertaining than those which he had formerly experienced. In another succeeding part, by the *Marquis de Preschac*, Ragotin is again the principal character, and is much occupied in persuading a quack doctor, whom he believes to be a magician, to forward the success of his passion for Mad. L'Etoile. In a third sequel, which is by an anonymous author, the part of Ragotin is entirely abandoned, as also that of Rancune, and the reader is presented with a continuation of the more serious part of the ro-

mance, particularly the story of Destin, who turns out to be a son of the Count de Glaris, having been changed at nurse according to the Irish fashion.

The Roman Comique has also been versified by M. d'Orvilliers, and published in that poetical form at Paris, in 1733. Fontaine, too, has written a comedy, which comprehends most of the characters and best situations in the work of Scarron.

In the representations of Scarron, the provincial manners of the age in which the author lived are delineated, and he has exhibited, in lively and striking colours, what has been termed *le ridicule Campagnard*. The absurdities of the citizens of Paris have been painted by Furetiere,<sup>1</sup> in his

### ROMAN BOURGEOIS,

which, in the commencement, describes the ridiculous courtship by a counsellor, called Nicodemus, of Javotte, the daughter of a rascally attorney. Nicodemus ingratiates himself with the father of his mistress, by writing his papers for tenpence a sheet, and pleading his causes for half fees. Mat-

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, No. 3.

ers are almost finally arranged, when every thing is interrupted by the unexpected appearance of a girl, called Lucretia, who claimed a previous promise of marriage; and before Nicodemus had disentangled himself from this engagement, another lover presented himself, who was preferred by the father of Javotte. This intruder was an advocate, as well as his rival. The only time he had ever appeared at the bar, was when, twenty years before, he took the oaths to observe the regulations of court, to which he strictly adhered, as he never enjoyed an opportunity of transgressing them. But he possessed a considerable fortune of his own, a great part of which he had laid out in the purchase of old china, and black-letter books with wooden bindings. His dress formed a memorial of all the fashions that had prevailed in France for two centuries. In order to qualify herself for such a husband, Javotte had been allowed to frequent an assembly of wits, which was attended by a young gentleman, called Pancroce, who persuaded her to elope with him.

In this romance there are some spirited sketches, considerable fertility of delineation, and knowledge of the human character; but the portraits, like those in the *Roman Comique*, too often degenerate into caricatures.

## POLITICAL ROMANCE.

The origin of this species of romance has been traced as far back as the *Cyropædia* of Xenophon. Whether that celebrated performance be intended as a romance or history, has been the subject of much controversy. The basis of that part which relates the events of the life of Cyrus, from his fortieth year till his death, may be historically true ; but the details of his childhood and education, which embrace the period from his birth to his sixteenth year, must be entirely the offspring of the author's imagination.

I am not certain, whether under this class of romances I should comprehend the *Utopia* of Sir Thomas More. Every thing in that work is indeed imaginary ; but, as no particular story is carried on, it may rather be accounted a political treatise than a romance. Like the writings of other speculative politicians, its origin was derived from the *Republic* of Plato. The *Utopia*, like the *Commonwealth* of that philosopher, is the ideal picture of a nation which would indeed be poor and wretched, but which in the representation of the author is perfectly happy. By the detail of its

institutions, he obliquely censures the defects of existing governments, and proposes a more perfect model as a subject of imitation.

The author feigns, that while at Antwerp he had met with a person of the name of Raphael, who had accompanied Americo Vespucci to the New World. While on this voyage he had visited the island of Utopia, the name of which imports its non-existence. The first book, which is merely introductory, contains a dialogue chiefly on government, that passed between the author and this imaginary person. In the second book, the traveller gives a geographical description of the island ; the relations of the inhabitants in social life, their magistrates, their arts, their systems of war and religion. On the latter subject, which could hardly be expected from the practice of the author, the most unbounded toleration is granted. The greater part of the inhabitants believed in one Spirit, all-powerful and all-pervading ; but others practised the worship of heroes, and the adoration of stars. A community of wealth is a fundamental principle of this republic, and the structure what might be expected from such a basis. Indeed the interest of the Utopia arises solely from the classic elegance of its style, and the curiosity which is



naturally felt concerning the sentiments of distinguished characters.

This work was written about 1516, and soon became the admiration of all the classical scholars of the age. An English translation, by Robinson, has been lately published by Mr Dibdin, with a literary introduction. The life of Sir Thomas More has been written by his son-in-law, Roper, by his great-grandson, More, and within these few years by Mr Cayley : but the subject is too copious and important to admit of abridgment here. His character was indeed clouded by superstition, and the persecuting zeal by which the votaries of the Roman catholic persuasion are too often distinguished, but there remains ample room for admiration in the splendour of his legal acquirements, the unrivalled felicity of his temper, and, above all, the depth and elegance of his classical learning, more wonderful, if we consider the country in which he lived, the multiplicity and importance of his avocations, and his premature fate.—“ *Quid tandem non praestitisset admirabilis ista naturae felicitas, si hoc ingenium instituisset Italia, si totum Musarum sacris vacaret, si ad justam frugem ac veluti autumnum suum maturuisset ?*”

Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* suggested many

speculative works, somewhat in the form of a romance, concerning perfect systems of government. Of this description is Harrington's *Oceana*, which appeared in England about the middle of the 17th century, and though it be the model of a perfect republic, is perhaps the most rational of all similar productions.

The

## ARGENIS

of Barclay is usually numbered among political romances, though, I think, it is entitled to be thus ranked more from the disquisitions introduced, than from any very obvious analogy which the story bears to political incidents.

The author was of a Scotch family, but was born in France in 1582. Offended, it is said, at the request of James I. to translate the *Arcadia* into Latin, he composed the *Argenis*, to show he could write a better original. It was completed and published in 1621, which was the year of the author's death.

*Argenis* is represented as the daughter and heir-ess of Meliander, king of Sicily, and the romance chiefly consists of the war carried on to obtain

her hand, by two rivals, Lycogenes, a rebellious subject of Meliander, and Poliarchus, prince of Gaul.

It is generally believed that all the incidents in the *Argenis* have an allusion to the political transactions which took place in France during the War of the League, but it is difficult to determine with precision what are the particular events or characters represented. Each commentator has applied them according to his own fancy, for which the indefinite nature of the composition gave ample scope. Meliander, however, it seems to be universally allowed, is intended for Henry III. *Argenis* typifies the succession of the crown; Lycogenes is the family of Guise, or the whole faction of the league; Poliarchus, Henry IV., or the aggregate of his party. The most minute incidents in the romance have been also historically applied, but in a manner so forced and capricious, that they might as plausibly be wrested to correspond with the political events in any age or country, as those which occurred in France towards the close of the 16th century. On the whole, there appears little to distinguish the *Argenis* from the common heroic romance, except that there are hardly any episodes introduced, and that it contains a great number of political disquisitions, in which such

high monarchical notions are generally expressed, that the author has been frequently accused as the advocate of arbitrary principles of government. We are informed in a Latin life of Barclay, that it was a favourite work of Cardinal Richelieu, and suggested to him many of his political expedients. Cowper, the poet, recommends *Argenis* to his correspondents, Mr Rose and Lady Hesketh, as the most amusing romance that ever was written. "It is," says he in a letter to the former, "interesting in a high degree—richer in incident than can be imagined—full of surprises which the reader never forestalls, and yet free from all entanglement and confusion. The style, too, appears to me to be such as would not dishonour Tacitus himself." The Latinity, however, of Barclay, has, on the other hand, been severely ridiculed in the celebrated Spanish work, *Fra Gerundio*. "There you have the Scotchman, John Barclay, who would not say *exhortatio* to escape the flames, but *parænesis*, which signifies the same, but is a little more of the Greek; nor *obedire*, but *decedere*, which is of more abstruse signification, and is equivocal in to the bargain."

Though the beautiful fiction of *Telemachus* be rather an epic poem in prose, than a romance, it

seems to have led the way to several political romances, or, at least, to have nourished a taste for this species of composition.

The *Cyropædia* of Xenophon, which may be considered perhaps as the origin of all political romance, seems more particularly to have suggested two works, which appeared in France about the commencement of the 18th century, *Les Voyages de Cyrus* and *Le Repos de Cyrus*. Of these the former work is by the Chevalier Ramsay, the friend of Fenelon, and tutor to the sons of the Pretender. The author has chosen, as the subject of his romance, that part of the life of Cyrus, which extends from the sixteenth to the fortieth year of his age, a period of which nothing is said in the *Cyropædia*. During this interval, Ramsay has made his hero travel according to fancy, and by this means takes occasion to describe the manners, religion, and policy, of the countries which are visited, as also some of the principal events in their history. The Persian prince wanders through Greece, Syria, and Egypt, and in the course of his journey enjoys long philosophical and political conversations with Zoroaster, Solon, and the prophet Daniel. What is said concerning the manners of the different nations, is fortified by pas-

sages from the ancient philosophers and poets. The author exhibits considerable acquaintance with chronology and history, and enters profoundly into the fables of the antients, from which he attempts to show that the leading truths of religion are to be found in the mythological systems of all nations. His work, however, is rather a treatise intended to form the mind of a young prince than a fiction. The only romantic incident is the love of Cyrus for Cassandana, which occupies a considerable part of the first book, where the usual obstacles of the prohibition of parents, and a powerful rival, are interposed to the happiness of the lovers. In 1728, a satire on Ramsay's Cyrus, entitled *La Nouvelle Cyropædie, ou Reflexions de Cyrus sur ses Voyages*, was printed at Amsterdam. In this work, Cyrus, having become master of Asia, complains, in six evening conversations with his confidant Araspes, of the pedantic and ridiculous part he is made to act in his travels. A serious criticism was written by the Pere Vinot, to which Ramsay made a suitable reply.

*Le Repos de Cyrus* embraces the same period of the life of the Persian prince as the work of Ramsay, and comprehends his journey into Media, his chase on the frontiers of Assyria, his wars

with the king of that country, and his return to Persia.

Most of the works which come under the class of political Romances, are but little interesting in their story, and mankind have long been satisfied of the folly of speculations concerning perfect systems of government. Indeed, in a history of fiction, there are only two kinds of compositions, which seem entitled to minute analysis; first, those which, though comparatively imperfect, have been the earliest models of a peculiar series of romances; and secondly, the most perfect production of the order to which it belongs—the *patriarch*, as it were, of the family, and most *illustrious of the descendants*. In many instances, however, the most distinguished work of the class is so well known and popular, that any detail concerning it might appear tiresome and superfluous. This is peculiarly the case with the *Telemague*, which has been familiar to every one almost from childhood; and accordingly, it is more suitable to analyze the next most perfect specimen, which, in the class of political romances, happens not to be very generally known. In this view it may be proper to give some account of the romance of

## SETHOS.

This work, which was first published in 1731, was written by the Abbé Terrasson, 'a *Savant*, who in his *cloge*, pronounced by D' Alembert, is represented as at the head of the practical philosophers of his age. "Calm, simple, and candid, he was so far," says D' Alembert, "from soliciting favours, that he did not know the names of the persons by whom they were distributed. More a philosopher than Democritus, he did not even deign to laugh at the absurdities of his contemporaries; and equally indifferent about others and himself, he seemed to contemplate from the planet Saturn the Earth which we inhabit."

The author of *Sethos* feigns, in his preface, that his work is translated from the Greek MS. of a writer who probably lived in the reign of Marcus Aurelius. After bestowing due praise on the *Telenague*, and perhaps more than due on the *Voyages de Cyrus*, he observes, that his romance does not merely contain, like these works, a course of education, but the practical application of its principles to the varied events of life. Another object of Terrasson was to exhibit whatever has been



ascertained concerning the antiquities, manners, and customs of the ancient Egyptians, or the origin of sciences and arts. It is in this view, perhaps, that Sethos is chiefly valuable, and in fact there would be few antiquarian works more precious, had the author, who was profoundly learned, appended in notes the original authorities from which he derived his information.

About fifty years before the Trojan war, Osoroth, when somewhat advanced in life, succeeded to the throne of Memphis, the second in dignity of the four great sovereignties of Egypt. Previous to his accession he had espoused Nepthe, princess of This, another Egyptian monarchy, and by her he had a son called Sethos, the hero of the romance. Osoroth, who has many traits of character in common with Louis XV., is represented as one of those feeble, indolent, and indifferent princes, who are the best or worst of kings as chance furnishes them with good or bad administrators of the royal authority. This monarch committed the management of state affairs to Nepthe; and what seemed to the public an enlightened choice, was nothing but the result of his natural indifference. In fact, the queen governed admirably, partly owing to her own distinguished talents, and partly to the councils of Amodes, a sage

whom she consulted on every important occurrence. When Sethos was eight years old, the queen, whose health had been long enfeebled, was seized with a dangerous illness. Meanwhile Oso-roth, who, though the monarch of a great people, presented the singular spectacle of not knowing how to employ his time, had become entangled by the assiduities and arts of Daluca, a lady of the court; and the queen foresaw with pain, that in the event of her death, the destiny of Sethos might depend on this worthless woman. She at length expired, after having intrusted her son to the wise Amedes, and having, at the same moment, consigned to the young prince a casket of precious jewels, recommending to him above all carefully to preserve a heart-shaped emerald, adorned with figures in relief of Osiris, Isis, and Horus.

As the solemn invocations for the health of Nepthe had afforded the author an opportunity of representing some of the religious rites of Egypt, her pompous funeral furnishes an occasion of describing their obsequies. The Egyptians, according to Herodotus, were the first people who believed in the immortality of the soul, and it appeared from the simplicity of their palaces, compared with the magnificence of their tombs, that they were less

occupied with their transitory dwellings on earth than with the prospect of their everlasting abodes. Ere the body of a prince could be conveyed by Charron to the Labyrinth in the midst of Lake Mœris, a judgment, whether the deceased was worthy of funeral rites, was pronounced by forty-one just and inexorable judges. The high priest of Memphis delivered on the present occasion a funeral oration on the late queen—"Portrait," says D'Alembert, "que Tacite eut admiré, et dont Platon eut conseillé la lecture à tous les Rois."

On the death of Nepthe the wicked Daluca having first become regent, and being afterwards espoused by Osoroth, formed an administration, which was a complete contrast to that of the late queen. Her dislike of Sethos was increased by giving birth to two sons, and in order that her machinations against that prince might succeed, she began by corrupting the morals of the court. The progress of depravity, and the methods by which it was produced, are portrayed with much force of satire. Meanwhile the education of Sethos commenced, a subject which is introduced by a beautiful but succinct account of the state of science and arts in Egypt, as also by a description of the palace and gardens of the kings of Memphis, which formed one vast museum, stored with every

means of exercising the talents and preserving the knowledge of mankind.

The admirable genius of young Sethos seconded well the instructions of the sage Amedes, who prepared him by every exercise of mind and body for those trials which, from his situation, would probably ensue. Several instances of the prince's courage and address are related, as his being the first who descended from the Great Pyramid with his face towards the spectators, and his taking captive a huge serpent which laid waste a province of the kingdom. After having given sufficient proofs of prudence and courage, Amedes resolved secretly to procure for his pupil, now sixteen years of age, the supreme honour of initiation, a dignity which could only be attained by uncommon fortitude and sufferings. The whole process of this august ceremony—the subterraneous temples, and palaces, and gardens of the Egyptian priests, are finely delineated, and form by much the most interesting portion of the work.

Preparatory to the initiation, Amedes having obtained permission for his pupil to visit for a few months the temples of Egypt, conducted him by night to the Great Pyramid. They entered it, and reached at length that mysterious Well,

concerning which so much has been said by travellers. (Clarke's Travels, vol. III. p. 138, &c.) Down this they descended by little secret steps of iron, and approached two brazen gates, which opened softly, but shut with a tremendous crash. Sethos beheld at a distance, through iron grates, high illuminated arcades, and heard the most harmonious music, which he was told by Amedes (who had been himself initiated) proceeded from priests and priestesses in a subterraneous temple. He was also informed that he had now an opportunity of entering on the trials preparatory to initiation,—trials which required the most heroic courage and greatest prudence. Sethos, of course, determined to proceed, undismayed by an alarming inscription on the portal through which he now passed.

After leaving Amedes, Sethos walked more than a league without discovering any new object. He came at length to an iron door, and a little farther on to three men, "*armés d'un casque qui étoit chargé d'une tête d'Anubis: c'est ce qui donna lieu à Orphée de faire de ces trois hommes les trois têtes du chien Cerbere, qui permettoit l'entrée de l'Enfer sans en permettre la sortie.*" This idea is carried on through the whole of the author's subterraneous description, and is

doubtless the foundation of Warburton's hypothesis concerning the sixth book of Virgil. The author relates in a most striking manner the corporeal purification of Sethos by fire and water and air, subsequent to which his soul is in like manner refined by invocations and instructions, by silence, solitude, and neglect.

At the conclusion of his initiation Sethos was conducted through all the subterranean abodes of the priests, the description of which is almost copied from the sixth book of Virgil. No class of men have been so splendid in their buildings as priests, and as Egypt was the country of all others in which they were most powerful, they had nowhere erected such magnificent structures. Nothing can be more happy than Terrasson's picture of the subterranean Elysium, and the art with which the priests employed its scenes in the illusory visions which they presented to those who consulted them. The mysteries of the Pantheon are also unveiled, and the author concludes his highly interesting account of the initiation with a description of the Isiack pomp, and the manifestation of Sethos to the people.

The romance now becomes less amusing, and the author seems to be deserted by his genius as soon as he quits the sombre magnificence of an-

cient superstition. By the bad management of Daluca, the kingdom of Memphis was involved in a quarrel with the neighbouring monarchies. Sethos departed for the seat of war, where he distinguished himself, not merely by his wonderful valour, but by extraordinary warlike inventions. Owing, however, to the treachery of the general of Memphis, who had been commanded by Queen Daluca to rid her of Sethos, he was desperately wounded, and left for dead in a nocturnal skirmish with the enemy. Being afterwards discovered to be alive by some Ethiopian soldiers, he was sold by them as a slave to the Phœnicians, whom he accompanied in a great expedition to Taprobana (Ceylon). After the establishment of the Phœnicians on that island, Sethos, now under the name of Cheres, recommended himself so strongly to the commander of the expedition by his wisdom and valour, that he is furnished with a fleet to make a voyage of discovery round Africa. In this enterprise Sethos unites the skill of Columbus with the benevolence of Cook and the military genius of Cæsar. He civilizes Guinea, and forms a vast commercial establishment, which he names New Tyre.

Meanwhile an impostor, called Azores, availing himself of a report, now generally spread through

Egypt, that Sethos was yet alive, resolved to personate the prince, and being aided by an host of Arabians, he besieged Hieropolis, the capital of the King of This, whose daughter, the Princess Mnevie, he had vainly sought in marriage. Intelligence of this imposture having reached Sethos, he arrived in Egypt, still bearing the name of Chereg, defeated Azores under the walls of Hieropolis, and drove him back to Arabia. Sethos was accordingly received with the utmost joy and gratitude by the King of This, and a mutual passion gradually arose between him and the Princess Mnevie. He procured from the other three kings of Egypt the title of Conservator, and general of the Egyptian forces, in which capacity he again defeated Azores, who had attacked the territories of Memphis with a force he had anew assembled.

While engaged in this war, the Princess Mnevie, anxious at the absence and dangers of her lover, consulted the priests of Heliopolis with respect to his destiny, which furnishes another opportunity to the author of giving a representation, in which he excels, of the solemn witchery employed by the priests of Egypt. Sethos, on his return to Memphis, to which he conducted Azores



as a captive, commenced the public trial and examination of that impostor in presence of the king and princes. The slave instantly recognizes his master, and the true Sethos, at length throwing aside his disguise, gives incontestible proofs of his identity. Osoroth immediately resigns the crown in his favour, and Daluca poisons herself. Sethos, after reigning five days, and causing his name to be inscribed in the list of the kings of Egypt as Sethos *Sosis*, or Sethos the Conservator, gives up the kingdom to his half-brother Prince Beon, one of the sons of Daluca. Not satisfied with this, he procures the consent of the Princess Mnevic to marry his second brother Pemphos, who had been long attached to her. Sethos himself, with the title of King Conservator, retires to the temples of the priests of Memphis, whither ambassadors are frequently sent to him from different kings, and he is almost daily consulted by his brothers.

This extravagant disinterestedness of the hero, in resigning his kingdom to one brother and his mistress to another, is the circumstance at which the reader of Sethos is most disappointed and displeased. Terrasson might consider the *summum bonum* as consisting in geometry and retirement, but this is ~~not~~ the general sentiment of the read-

ers of romance. It is very sublime, indeed, to give up a kingdom and a mistress, but the Conservator of Egypt must have sometimes thought, and the readers of Sethos will always think, that he had better have retained them both :—

*Lorsque Je prête à tous un main secourable,  
Par quel destin faut il que ma vertu m'accable!*

Indeed, the whole of the latter part of Sethos—his voyage round Africa, and his wars with the impostor, are insufferably tiresome. The earlier books, however, are uncommonly interesting, and D'Alembert, while he confesses that the philosophy and erudition which the author had introduced were little to the taste of an age and nation which sacrificed every thing to amusement, declares, “ qu' il n' y a rien dans le Telemaque qui approche d' un grand nombre de caracteres, de traits de morale, de reflexions fines et de discours quelquefois sublimes qu' on trouve dans Sethos.” “ The author of Sethos,” says Gibbon, (Miscellanies, vol. IV. p. 195,) “ was a scholar and philosopher. His book has far more originality and variety than Telemachus : yet Sethos is forgotten, and Telemachus will be immortal. That

harmony of style, and the great talent of speaking to the heart and passions, which Fenelon possessed, was unknown to Terrasson. I am not surprised that Homer was admired by the one and criticized by the other." Indeed Terrasson is better known, at least in this country, as a second Zoilus, than as the author of *Sethos*.

Besides its intrinsic merit, the romance of *Sethos* is curious, as being the foundation of the hypothesis concerning the 6th book of the *Æneid* maintained by Warburton in his *Divine Legation of Moses*, which was first published in 1738, seven years after the appearance of *Sethos*. Servius, one of the earliest commentators on Virgil, had long ago remarked, that many things in the *Æneid* were delivered according to the profound learning of the Egyptian theology (*Multa per altam scientiam theologicorum Ægyptiorum*). This idea is carried on through the whole of Terrasson's description of the subterranean dwellings of the Egyptian priests, and the initiation of his hero. "Mais on voit clairement dans les trois épreuves du feu, de l'eau et de l'air, les trois purifications que les âmes doivent essayer avant que de revenir à la vie, et que le plus grand poëte des Latins a empruntées dans le sixième livre de son

Eneide : *infectum eluitur scelus aut exuritur igni*, sans omettre la circonstance de la suspension a l'air agité ou aux vents : Le fleuve d'oubli et la porte d'ivoire y ont leur place." And again, " J' aurois lieu de faire' ici une invocation semblable a celles des poetes qui entreprennent une description des Enfers.—Qu' il me soit permis de reveler les choses qu' J' ai apprises, et de mettre au jour ce qui se passoit dans les entrailles de la terre et sous le voile impenetrable du plus profond silence. A peine Sethos fut il descendu dans le souterrain du coté du temple superieur, qu' il fut extremement surpris d' entendre des cris d' enfans. Orphée qui en avoit ete surpris comme lui, supposa depuis que les enfans morts a la maternelle etoient placés a l' entrée des enfers ;"

Continuo auditæ voces, vagitus et ingens,  
 Infantumque animæ fletus in limine primo;  
 Quos dulcis vitæ exortes, et ab ubere raptos  
 Abstulit atra dies, et funere mersit acerbo.

" En avançant Sethos se trouva dans un lieu enchanté qu' on appelloit l' Elisée. Ici comme le jour tomboit d' une hauteur de cent quarante pieds, il etoit affoibli; et l' ombre des arbres dont

ce jardin étoit rempli l' affoiblissant encore, il sembloit que l'on ne jouissoit en plein jour que d' un clair de Lune. C' est ce qui fist naître a Orphée la pensée de donner a l' Elisée un Soleil et des astres particuliers :”

— Solemque suum sua sidera norunt.

Terrasson, however, declares, that the allegories of the Egyptians “ sont peu de chose en comparaison des mysteres de Ceres institués a Eleusine sur le modele de ceux d' Isis.” Now Warburton, in the second book of his *Divine Legation*, while inculcating that all legislators have confirmed the belief in a future state of rewards and punishments by the establishment of mysteries, contends that the allegorical descent of Æneas into hell was no other than an enigmatical representation of his initiation into the Eleusinian mysteries, “ which came originally from Egypt, the fountain head of legislation.” On this system he attempts to show that the whole progress through Tartarus and Elysium is symbolically conformable to what has been ascertained concerning the mysteries. This appropriation of Warburton was first remarked by Cooper in his *Life of Socrates*, where

he says, "Warburton supposes the whole sixth book of the *Æneid* to be a description of the Eleusinian mysteries, which, though he lets it pass for his own, was borrowed, or more properly stolen, from a French romance, entitled the *Life of Sethos*." Gibbon, in his *Critical Observations on the Sixth Book of the Æneid*, where he completely refutes Warburton's hypothesis, remarks, that "Some have sought for the Poetic Hell in the mines of Epirus, and others in the mysteries of Egypt. As this last notion was published in French six years before it was invented in English, the learned author of the *Divine Legation* has been severely treated by some ungenerous adversaries. Appearances, it must be confessed, wear a very suspicious aspect; but what are appearances," he sarcastically subjoins, "when weighed against his lordship's declaration, that this is a point of honour in which he is particularly delicate, and that he may venture to boast that no author was ever more averse to take to himself what belonged to another (*Letters to a late Professor of Oxford*.)? Besides, he has enriched this mysterious discovery with many collateral arguments which would for ever have escaped all inferior critics. In the case of *Hercules*, for

instance, he demonstrates that the initiation and the descent to the shades were the same thing, because an ancient has affirmed that they were different."

## CHAPTER XI.

*Pastoral Romance.—Arcadia of Sannazzaro.  
—Diana.—Astrée.—Sir Philip Sidney's Ar-  
cudia.*

WE have seen in a former volume that Pastoral Romance occupied a place among the comparatively few and uninteresting prose fictions of the ancients, and that one very perfect specimen of this sort of composition, the *Daphnis and Chloë* of Longus, was presented to the world in the earliest ages of romance. It was to be expected, accordingly, that when the taste for prose fiction became more prevalent than formerly, this easy and agreeable species of composition should not have been neglected. The very circumstance of so many works having appeared, of which the chief subject was turmoil and slaughter, led the mind, by a natural association, to wish to repose amid pastoral



delights; and the beautiful descriptions of rural nature, which occasionally occurred in chivalrous romance, would suggest the idea of compositions devoted to the description of rustic manners and pastoral enjoyments. Another circumstance contributed perhaps to the formation of this taste. Virgil was one of the poets whose names had been venerated even amid the thickest shades of ignorance, and his works, at the first revival of literature, became the highest subject of wonder and imitation. Of his divine productions, the Eclogues form a distinguished part, and when books and manuscripts were scarcely to be procured, were probably the portion of his writings most generally known. This, perhaps, contributed in no inconsiderable degree to form a taste for pastoral compositions, while the comparative easiness of the task induced the authors to write the whole, or the greater part, of them in prose, and frequently to combine with ruder materials the descriptions and images of that bard, who was the object of universal admiration.

During the middle ages, indeed, pastoral compositions had been frequent, but they partook more of the nature of the eclogue, or drama, than of romance. The vapid productions of the Troubadours contained, not the adventures of rural cha-

acters, but insipid or affected descriptions of nature. Among the works of the Trouveurs, there are some pastorals on the loves and adventures of shepherds and shepherdesses. In these there is often a good deal of nature and naïveté in the dialogue, but they differ little from each other. A poet goes out to walk, it is always in spring, and meets a beautiful shepherdess. Sometimes she calls in to her assistance the surrounding shepherds, who come up with all expedition, and put the lover to flight; but she more commonly accepts his propositions, of which the fulfilment is often very circumstantially described.

The Ameto of Boccaccio, which is a prose idyllium with poetical sprinklings, bears a strong resemblance to the pastorals of the Troubadours but is more rich in rural description. The scene is laid in ancient Etruria: seven nymphs recount the story of their loves, and each story concludes with eclogues, which were the first in the Italian language. Ameto, a young hunter, presides over this amorous assembly, whose adventures, like those in all subsequent pastoral romances, refer to real characters, as has been explained in a long letter by Sansovino; but his discoveries and elucinations are little interesting, except those which

relate to Fiammetta and her loves with Calcone, by whom Boccaccio himself is designated.

Boccaccio's *Idyllium* may be justly regarded as the prototype of the *Arcadia* of Sannazzaro, which was written towards the end of the 15th century, and which, though it cannot itself be considered as a pastoral romance, yet appears to have first opened the field to that species of composition. Like the *Ameto*, it consists partly of verse and partly of prose, a mode of writing which was adopted in all subsequent pastoral romances. Of these, indeed, the prose generally constitutes the largest proportion, and sonnets or eclogues are only occasionally introduced for the sake of variety, or as a species of interlude. The *Arcadia*, however, is about equally divided between prose and verse, the principal intention of the author, as appears from his own words, being to write a series of eclogues; and he seems to have intermixed the prose relations merely in order to connect them. Nor does the *Arcadia* properly comprehend any story with a commencement and conclusion, which has always been considered essential to a romance. It entirely consists of a description of the employments and amusements of shepherds, whose actions and sentiments are generally well adapted to the

simplicity of pastoral life. The author, who, under the names Ergasto and Sincero, is a principal character in the work, retires from Italy, on account of some love disappointment, to a plain on the summit of Mount Partenio, a beautiful region in Arcadia, possessed solely by shepherds. The pastoral inhabitants of this district meet together, and complain in alternate strains of the cruelty of their respective mistresses. They celebrate the festival of their goddess Pales, or assemble round the tomb of some deceased shepherd, and rehearse his praise. Under the name of Massilia, whom the author feigns to have been the most respectable Sibyl of Arcadia, he laments the death of his mother. Funeral games are performed at her sepulchre, and Ergasto distributes prizes to those who excel in the various contests. The work also contains many disguised incidents, which allude to the misfortunes of the author's patrons, the exiled princes of Naples. He also recounts his amours with the beautiful Carmosina, celebrates her charms under the name of Amaranta, and laments her death under that of Phyllis. At length he is one morning accosted by a lovely Naiad, under whose protection he is conducted to the bottom of the deep, where he sees the grottoes in which all

the streams of the earth have their source, particularly the Sebeto. A submarine excursion of this kind was a favourite notion with the Italian poets, in imitation probably of the descent of the shepherd Aristaeus in the fourth Georgic (l. 360, &c.) It is introduced by Tasso in the fourteenth canto of the Jerusalem, where the two knights, who go in search of Rinaldo, are conducted by a magician into the bowels of the earth (st. 37, &c.). A similar device is employed by Fracastoro in the Syphilis (lib. II.). After his aquatic survey, Sannazzaro emerges, by a route which is described in a manner so unintelligible as to be of no use to future travellers, near the foot of a mountain in Italy, and concludes the work by his return to Naples, where he arrives much to his own satisfaction, and still more to that of the reader.

In the Arcadia, the eclogues are chiefly written in what are called *Versi Sdrucchioli*, the invention of which has by some been attributed to Sannazzaro. They consist, for the most part, of lamentations for the death of a shepherd, or cruelty of a shepherdess. Sometimes, too, the swains contend in alternate strains for a reward, which is a crook, a lamb, or an obscene picture.<sup>1</sup> These eclogues

<sup>1</sup> Il qual tiene nel suo mezzo dipinto il Rubicondo Pri-

are, in a great measure, imitated from Virgil and other classics, with whose writings Sannazzaro had early rendered himself familiar, as a preparatory study to his admirable Latin compositions.

The pastoral dramas of Italy seem also to have suggested many incidents and fancies to the authors of pastoral romance. Thus, for example, Politian, in his *Orfeo*, which is the prototype of that elegant species of comedy, has employed the responsive Echo :—

*Che fai tu Echo mentre ch' io ti chiamo ?—Amo.*

This conceit, of which there are some examples in the Greek *Anthologia*, and which Martial ridicules in his contemporary poets, has been frequently introduced by the Italian imitators of Politian, and with more or less absurdity by all pastoral romancers.

In the *Pastor Fido* there is the incident of a lover disguising himself as a female at a festival, in order to obtain a species of intercourse with his mistress, which, in his own character, he could not procure. This is a leading event in the principal subject of the *Astrea*, and is also introduced in one of the episodes of the

*apo che strettissimamente abbraccia una Ninfa ed a mal grado di lei, &c.*

## DIANA,

which was written in Spanish by George of Montemayor,<sup>1</sup> about the middle of the 16th century, and is the earliest regular romance of a pastoral description. The scene is laid at the foot of the mountains of Leon; but it is impossible to tell what is the period of the action, such is the confusion of modern manners and ancient mythology. The characters alternately invoke the saints and fawns, and the destiny of one of the principal shepherdesses, who had been educated at a convent, is regulated by the oracles of Venus and Minerva.

Diana, the heroine of this work, was the fairest of those shepherdesses who inhabited the smiling meadows which are watered by the river Ezla. The young Sereno, who also dwelt on the banks of this stream, adored the beautiful Diana, who felt for him a reciprocal passion. They loved as in the age of gold, and their happiness was as complete as was consistent with innocence.

A felicity of this nature cannot continue long in

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, No. 4.

a romance. Sereno, for some reason, which is not explained, is obliged to leave his native country, and departs after one of those interviews, the tenderness of which almost compensates the bitterness of separation. A melancholy period of absence is terminated by a more melancholy return, as he now finds his mistress in the arms of Delio, an unseemly shepherd, whom her father had compelled her to accept as a husband. The surrounding scenery reminds the lover of the happiness he had possessed, and of which he was now deprived. He sees his name interwoven with Diana's on the bark of the trees, and again views the fountain where they had pledged eternal faith.

While gazing on objects which excited such strong and painful emotions, he overhears the musical lament of the shepherd Sylvanus, a lover who had been rejected by Diana. He and Sereno, though formerly rivals, become friends from similarity of misfortune. Long they complain both in prose and rhyme of their unfaithful mistress ; and, while thus employed, are accosted by a disconsolate shepherdess, who emerges from a thicket near the banks of the Ezla. They inform her of the cause of their grief, and she, in return, relates to them her story.



This damsel, whose name is Sylvania, had been accosted at the festival of Ceres by a beautiful shepherdess, with whom she formed a strong and sudden friendship. The religious ceremonies being concluded, the unknown shepherdess confesses to Sylvania that she is in disguise, and is, in fact, the shepherd Alanio. Then this ambiguous character fell at the feet of Sylvania, professed the most ardent affection, and entreated the forgiveness of the fair. From that moment Sylvania conceived the warmest attachment to the person who was now imploring her pardon. This suppliant, however, was not the shepherd Alanio, as was pretended, but the shepherdess Ysmania, who, in sport, had assumed the character of her cousin and lover Alanio, to whom she had a striking resemblance; but Alanio, being informed by his mistress of the adventure, particularly of the hopeless passion conceived by Sylvania, resolved to avail himself of the incident. He forsook Ysmania, and attached himself to Sylvania, who readily transferred the affection she had formed for the false to the real Alanio. Ysmania consoled herself for the loss of her lover, by coquetting with a shepherd of the name of Montano. Alanio, on hearing of this, whimsically resolved on recover-

ing the affections of his former mistress. While thus employed, Montano resorted frequently to the cottage of Sylvania's father, in order to adjust with him their rights of pasturage; and, after a few visits, entirely forgot Ysmenia, and became deeply enamoured of Sylvania. Montano pursued Sylvania through the fields and forests; he, in turn, was pursued by Ysmenia, who was generally followed by Alanio. This *Brouillerie d'Amour* was suggested by an Italian pastoral drama, and reminds us of the loves of Pan and Echo in an Idyllium of Moschus :

Pan sighs for Echo o'er the lawn,  
Sweet Echo loves the dancing fawn,  
The dancing fawn fair Lyda charms;  
As Echo Pan's soft bosom warms,  
So for the fawn sweet Echo burns;  
Thus all inconstant in their turns,  
All fondly woo, are fondly wooed,  
Pursue, or are themselves pursued.

In these circumstances Sylvania had come to reside with an aunt who lived on the banks of the Ezla, and had learned, since her arrival, that Montano had returned to the feet of Ysmenia, and had been espoused by that shepherdess, who,

at the same time, had given her sister in marriage to Alanio.

I know not whether the audience unravelled this story at the first hearing, but they agreed to meet this intricate damsel every morning in a solitary valley, where they sighed without restraint, and indulged in long conferences on the misfortunes of love, and discussions on questions of gallantry. The debates of this amorous society are considerably diversified by the arrival of three nymphs, who are about to relate their adventures, when interrupted by the informal gallantry of three satyrs. This incident serves to introduce a portly shepherdess called Felismena, who, at a most critical moment, and unseen by all, transfixes these ardent lovers in succession with her arrows, and then bursting into view, commences her story in the following terms :—


“ One day, shortly previous to my birth, a conversation took place between my parents concerning the judgment of Paris, in the course of which my mother complained that the apple had been refused to Minerva, and contended that it was due to her who united the perfections of mind to the beauties of person. In the course of the ensuing night Venus appeared to her in a dream, reproach-

ed her with ingratitude for the favours with which she had been loaded, and announced that the child, of which she was about to be delivered, would cost her the loss of life, and that her offspring would be agitated by the most violent passions which the resentment of Venus could inflict.

“ My mother was much troubled at this cruel sentence, till, on the departure of Venus, Minerva appeared, and comforted her by an assurance that her child would be distinguished by firmness of mind and feats of arms.

“ The first part of the threats of Venus was speedily accomplished, and my father, having early followed my mother to the tomb, I was left an orphan. Henceforth I resided at the house of a distant relative ; and, having attained my seventeenth year, became the victim of the offended goddess by falling in love with Don Felix, a young nobleman of the province in which I lived. The object of my affections felt a reciprocal passion, but his father, having learned the attachment which subsisted betwixt us, sent his son to court, with a view to prevent our union. Soon after his departure, I followed him in the disguise of a page, and discovered on the night of my arrival at the capital, by a serenade I heard him give, that Don Felix had alrea-

dy disposed of his affections. Without being recognised by him, I was admitted into his service, and was engaged by my former lover to conduct his correspondence with the mistress, who, since our separation, had supplanted me in his heart. From the disguise in which I appeared, she conceived for me the warmest attachment, and, perceiving that her best hope of enjoying frequent interviews with me was to indulge the expectations of her lover, she transmitted answers to Don Felix, which, though not decisive, were more lenient and encouraging than formerly. Exasperated, at length, by the cold return which I was obliged to make to her advances, she gradually replied in less favourable terms to Don Felix. The distress, with which he was in consequence affected, moved my compassion, and one day, while pressing his suit with the lady more vehemently than usual, she made an explicit and violent declaration of her sentiments in my behalf; and, having retired to her cabinet, expired immediately, in consequence of the agitation into which she had been thrown. Don Felix disappeared soon after the news of her death had reached him, and during the last twelvemonth I have roamed in the habit of a shepherdess from province to province in quest of the ungrateful fugitive."



A mistress serving her lover in capacity of a page, and employed by him to propitiate an obdurate fair one, is a common love adventure with the old novelists. There is a tale, founded on this incident, in the *Ecatommithi* of Cinthio, and another in *Bandello*, from which Shakspeare took the plot of *Twelfth Night*. These Italian novels were probably the origin of the above episode of *Felismena*, which seems, in turn, to have suggested the story of *Protheus* and *Julia* in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. It will be recollected, that while *Protheus* and *Julia* are mutually enamoured, the former is sent by his father from Verona to the court of Milan, to which he proceeds by sea. Soon after his arrival he falls in love with *Sylvia*, the duke's daughter. *Julia* follows him in disguise of a page,\* and discovers the estrangement of his affections by the evening music which he gives to the ear of his new mistress. She then enters into his service, and is employed by him to propitiate the affections of her rival. The outline of this plot corresponds so closely with the Spanish romance, that there can be little doubt it was imitated by Shakspeare, who, besides, has copied the original in some minute particulars, which clearly evince the source from which the drama has been derived: As for example, in the letter which

Protheus addresses to Julia, her rejection of it when offered by her waiting-maid, and the device by which she afterwards attempts to procure a perusal (Act I. sc. II.). In several passages, indeed, the dramatist has copied the language of the pastoral.

But while, in some respects, Shakspeare has thus closely followed the romance, he has departed from it in more essential incidents, in a manner (as usual with him) that rather injures than improves the story. In the *Diana*, the young man is sent on his travels by his father, in order to prevent an unsuitable marriage, but Protheus is dispatched to Milan at the idle suggestion of a servant, and apparently for no other purpose than to give a commencement to the intrigue. Don Felix is indeed an unfaithful lover, yet his spirit, generosity, and honour, still preserve the esteem and interest of the reader; but the unprincipled villain, into whom he has been transformed in the drama, not only forsakes his mistress, but attempts to supplant his friend, and to supplant him by the basest artifice. The revival of affection, too, is much more natural and pleasing in the romance than in the play. In the former, Celia, the new flame of Felix, was then no longer in being, and his former mistress, as we shall afterwards find,

had a fresh claim to his gratitude; but Protheus returns to Julia with as much levity as he had abandoned her, and apparently for no reason, except that his stratagem had failed, and that his fraud had been exposed. The story of Felismena seems also to have suggested the part of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster* relating to the disguise of Euphrasia, which forms the principal plot of that tragedy.

But to return to the romance. Felismena having finished her story, the three damsels, whom she had rescued from the satyrs, intimated that they were virgins consecrated to the service of Diana, and offered to conduct their companions to the temple of that goddess.

On the way thither they arrived at a delightful island in a lake, where, having entered a cottage, they discovered a shepherdess asleep in an elegant dishabille. This damsel, when awakened, insisted that it was her sighs that shook the trees of the valley, and her tears that fed the waters, by which the island was formed. It would have been contrary to pastoral etiquette to contest either the force of her sighs, or the abundance of her tears, for the singular exuberance of which she accounted by relating her story, of which the substance is, that she had been beloved by a father and son ;



that one night she had given a rendezvous to the latter, during which he had been transfixed by an arrow from the hand of the jealous parent, who had been on watch, and had not discovered that this rival was his son ; but that as soon as he recognised him he fell on the body of his child, and stabbed himself with a dagger. The lady did not interfere in the infliction of this voluntary punishment, but, terrified at the spectacle, she had fled from the spot, and had not stopped till she entered the cottage where she was discovered asleep by our travellers.

Belisa, for that was the name of the shepherdess, after being completely roused, agreed to accompany the nymphs of Diana to the temple of the goddess, where the whole troop arrived after a long journey. From this superb edifice, which was situated in a plain, surrounded by an almost impenetrable wood, there came forth a band of nymphs of inexpressible beauty, with a dignified priestess at their head, who entertained her visitors with much hospitality. They were introduced into a magnificent hall, adorned with figures of ancient heroes, distinguished by their generosity and valour. The statues of a long race of Spanish worthies were ranged after those of antiquity, and the praises of Spanish beauties were ce-

lebrated by Orpheus, who was there preserved in youth and song by the power of enchantment. An elegant entertainment followed, after which Felismena, at the request of the priestess, related a Moorish story, of which the spirit and interest form a remarkable contrast to the languor of the pastoral part of the romance.

Ferdinand of Spain having conquered a considerable district of the kingdom of Granada, appointed Rodrigo of Narvas to be Alcaide of the Moorish fortresses that had been recently acquired. One night this chief quitted his residence in Alora to inspect the enemy's frontiers. Having arrived at the banks of a stream, he passed with four of the knights who had accompanied him, and left other five at the ford. Those that remained behind soon heard a soft voice from a distance, and, placing themselves in concealment, they perceived, by the light of the moon, a young Moor, superbly mounted, and arrayed in splendid armour, who sung, as he advanced, the most amorous and impassioned verses in the language of Arabia. The Spanish knights attacked him on all sides. Though thus unequally opposed, the stranger had nearly overpowered his assailants, when the sound of the horn, a signal agreed on in

case of any emergency, recalled Don Rodrigo, as yet not far distant, to the succour of his friends. He defied the Moor to a single combat, which he readily accepted, but, exhausted by his former encounter, he became the prisoner of the Christian leader. While conducting his captive to Aïora, Rodrigo remarked his deep despondency, and begged to be intrusted with the cause of his affliction, which, he added, he could not attribute to any want of firmness to remain. In compliance with this request, the Moor informs his conqueror that he is the last survivor of the family of the Abencerrages, once so powerful and popular in Grenada. All his relatives having fallen under the displeasure of the king, and having been in consequence beheaded, he was sent, while a child, to Cartana, a fortress on the Christian frontier, of which the governor had been a secret friend of his father, and now brought him up as the brother of his daughter Xarifa. The early attachment of these young persons, and their change of behaviour on discovering that they were not related, is described with much truth and tenderness. But the happiness of the lovers was of short duration, as Xarifa was obliged to depart with her father to the go-

vernment of Coyn, to which he had been appointed by his sovereign. The day before he encountered the Spaniards, the Moor had received a billet from his mistress, informing him that her father had set out for Grenada, and that she awaited her lover in his absence. To this rendezvous accordingly he was on his way, when he had been detained by the attack of the Christians. Having related this story, Don Rodrigo granted the prisoner his freedom for three days, and he immediately set out to visit his mistress. The joy of the interview was complete, till he informed her of his adventures, and his obligation to return to captivity. Xarifa insisted on accompanying him to Alora, and they departed at day-break. Rodrigo, on their arrival, not only gave them their freedom, but wrote in their favour to the king of Grenada, who, though the request was made by the most formidable of his foes, agreed to pardon this last survivor of the race of the Abencerrages.

On the day which followed the recital of this story, the priestess of Diana, who knew by inspiration all the misfortunes of her guests, and had traced in her mind a plan for their future happiness, conducted them to the interior of the temple, and filled three cups from an enchanted

stream. This beverage having been quaffed by Sereno, Sylvanus, and Sylvania, they instantly fell into a profound sleep, in which they remained for a considerable time. Sereno awaked in a state of most perfect indifference for his once much loved Diana, while Sylvanus and Sylvania, forgetting their former attachments, arose deeply enamoured of each other, and employed the most ardent expressions of affection. Some of the most entertaining scenes in Shakspeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* appear to have been suggested by the transference of love occasioned by the potion of the priestess.—See also *Pucelle d'Orleans*, c. 17.

Felismena, meanwhile, received a route from the priestess, and, reassuming her arrows, proceeded according to her itinerary instructions.

During her journey she entered the cottage of a shepherd, whom she discovered to be the lover of Belisa. On seeing him, Felismena conjectured that he had been pierced by an arrow as his mistress related, but that he had not died of the wound, that his father had been in too great a hurry in stabbing himself, and his mistress in running away. In the course of conversation, however, she learned that though he had indeed been the rival of his father, and though it was true that his mistress had promised him a rendezvous, she had never

made her appearance. A magician, it seems, by whom she was beloved, foreseeing the nocturnal interview, had raised the phantoms who played the seemingly bloody part related by Belisa, and the lover did not arrive at the appointed place till all had disappeared. After hearing this satisfactory explanation, Felismena directed him to the temple of Diana, and thus restored him to the arms of the astonished Belisa.

Meanwhile Felismena pursued her journey to the valley of the Mondego. In the vicinity of Coimbra perceiving a knight beset by three enemies, she treated them as she had formerly done the satyrs, and discovered her much loved Don Felix in the person she had preserved. He returned with her to the temple of Diana, and was united to her at the same time that Sylvanus was married to Sylvania, and Belisa to her lover.

The romance concludes while Serceno yet remains in the state of indifference for Diana, into which the beverage of the priestess had thrown him. I have never seen the continuation, by Alonzo Percz, which consists of eight books; but in that by Gaspar Gil Polo, we are told that Serceno gradually recovered from his insensibility. Delio, the husband of Diana, likewise falls in love

with a damsel who had recently arrived on the banks of the Ezla. One day he meets her alone in a wood, and pursues her with a criminal intention, but is so much overheated by the chase that he dies shortly after. No obstacle now remaining to the union of Diana and Sereno, their nuptials are celebrated as soon as the time appropriated for the mourning of the widow has expired.

Gil Polo having thus taken up the romance when the story was on the point of being concluded, has chiefly filled his work with poetry, and stories which are entirely episodical, but which are less complicated, and perhaps more interesting, than those of his predecessor Montemayor.

Cervantes condemns the continuation by Alonso Perez, but bestows extravagant commendation on that of Gaspar Gil Polo, which he seems to consider as superior even to the original by Montemayor. "And since we began," said the curate, "with the Diana of Montemayor, I am of opinion we ought not to burn it, but only take out that part of it which treats of the magician Felicia and the enchanted water, as also all the longer poems, and let the work escape with its prose, and the honour of being the first of the kind. Here is another Diana," quoth the barber, "the second

of that name, by Salmantino (of Salamanca) ; nay, and a third too, by Gil Polo. Pray," said the curate, " let Salmantino increase the number of criminals in the yard, but as for that by Gil Polo, preserve it as charily as if Apollo himself had written it."

What ~~is~~ chiefly remarkable in the *Diana* of Montemayor, and its continuations, is the multitude of episodes with which they are encumbered, and the inartificial manner in which these are introduced. It has been supposed, indeed, that it was not so much the intention of Montemayor to write an interesting and well-connected romance, as to detail, under fictitious names, his own history, and the amours of the grandees of the court of Charles V.—" *Diversas historias*," as he himself expresses it, " *de casos que verdaderamente han sucedido, aunque tan disfraçadas debaxo de nombre y estilo pastoral*." Under the name of Sylvanus, in particular, he is supposed to have described an early amour of the duke of Alba, in whose service he spent a great part of his youth. Montemayor himself, we are told, was enamoured of a Spanish lady, whom, in his sonnets, he calls *Marfida*. After a return from a long journey he found her married, a disappointment which is represent-



ed by the union of Diana with Delio. This lady, it is said, lived to a great age in the province of Leon, and was visited there in the beginning of the 17th century, by Philip III. and his court, on their return from Portugal.

The *Galatea* of Cervantes, which was formed on the model of the *Diana*, is also reported to have been written with the intention of covertly relating the anecdotes of the age in which the author flourished, by a representation of the lives, the manners, and occupations of shepherds and shepherdesses, who inhabited the banks of the Tagus and Henares. Thus, under Damon, Cervantes is understood to represent himself, and by Amarillis, the obdurate nymph he courted. This romance, which, with the exception of a few unsuccessful poems, was the earliest work of its author, and was first printed in 1584, is now well known through the imitation of Florian. The adventures are not so extravagant as those of the *Diana*, but the style is greatly inferior, particularly in the poetical parts, which show that the author, as he himself expresses it in *Don Quixote*, was more conversant with misfortune than with the muse.<sup>1</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Il ne dit pas ce qu' il pense, mais Je pense ce qu' il dit.

episodes, as in its prototype, are interwoven in the most complicated manner. There are the same long discussions on the nature of love as in the *Diana*—equal pedantry, and a greater number of far-fetched conceits; all the heroes of fable and history are quoted, and the sun only shines with the light which he borrows from the eyes of *Galatea*:—

Ante la luz de unos serenos Ojos  
Que al Sol dan Luz con que da Luz al Suelo.

The work consists of six parts, and though it be not completed, there is enough to bestow on Cervantes the reputation of having written one of the most tiresome as well as one of the most amusing books in the world.

As the *Diana* of Montemayor became the most popular romance which had appeared in Spain since the time of *Amadis de Gaul*, there were many imitations of it, besides the *Galatea* of Cervantes. Among these may be numbered *Los Dies Libros de Fortuna d'Amor*, by Pedro Frasso, printed in 1573, and mentioned in *Don Quixote*; the *Pastor de Iberia*, by Bernardo de la Vega; *Desenganno de Celos*, by Lope de Enciso, 1586, and the *Ninfas de Henarez*, in six books, Alcala, 1587, by Bernardo Gonzales, who, I see, confesses in his

prologue, that he had just come from the Canary Islands, and had never seen the banks of the Henarez.


These Spanish compositions resemble in nothing the pastoral of Longus, (which has been regarded as the prototype of this species of romance,) except that the scene is laid in the country, and that the characters are shepherds and shepherdesses. Their authors have not rivalled the beauty and harmony of the rural descriptions of the Grecian, and the simplicity of his characters and sentiments they have not attempted to imitate.

Subsequent writers unfortunately chose for their model the Spanish instead of the Grecian style of pastoral composition.

In imitation of Montemayor and Cervantes, whose romances had been so popular in the peninsula, Honore D'Urfé, a French nobleman, wrote his

### ASTRÉE,

a work, which, under the disguise of pastoral incidents and characters, exhibits the singular history of his own family, and the amours at the court of Henry the Great. The first volume, dedicated



to that monarch, appeared in 1610, the second ten years afterwards, and the third, which is addressed to Lewis XIII., was given to the world four or five years subsequent to the publication of the second. The duke of Savoy was depositary of the fourth part, which remained in manuscript at the death of the author, and was transmitted on that event to Mademoiselle D'Urfé. She confided it to Baro, the secretary of her deceased relative, who published it two years after the death of his master, with a dedication to Mary of Medicis, and made up a fifth part from memoirs and fragments, also placed in his hands. The whole was printed at Rouen, 1647, in five volumes. A modern edition has been published by the Abbé Souchai, in which many things, especially the dialogues, have been much curtailed.

The period of the action of this celebrated work is feigned to be the end of the fifth or beginning of the sixth century, and the scene the banks of the Lignon. Celadon was the most amiable and most enamoured of the shepherds who lived in that happy age and delightful region :<sup>1</sup> his passion was

<sup>1</sup> This district was afterwards by no means remarkable for its pastoral beauty. In the preamble to St Pierre's *Arcadia*, which partly consists of a dialogue between the au-

returned by the beautiful Astrea, but at length the treachery and envy of the shepherd Semire inflame her mind with jealousy. She meets her lover, reproaches him with his perfidy, and then flies from his presence. Celadon casts himself, with arms across, into the river ; but his hopes of submersion, however well founded, are totally frustrated. He is thrown at some distance on the banks of the stream, near a grove of myrtles, where three nymphs come to his assistance, and conduct him to the castle of Issoura.

Astrea, who in concealment had perceived her lover precipitate himself into the stream, but had not foreseen such powerful effects from her re-

thor and Rousseau, the latter replies with a smile, to some observation of the former, ‘ Now you mention the shepherds of the Lignon, I once made an excursion to Forez, on purpose to see the country of Celadon and Astrea, of which D’Urfé has drawn such charming pictures. Instead of amorous swains, I found on the banks of the Lignon nothing but blacksmiths, forgers, and iron-workers.’

*Author.* ‘ What, in such a delightful country ?’

*Rousseau.* ‘ It is full of nothing else but forges. It was this journey to Forez that undeceived me. Previous to that time not a year passed without my reading Astrea from beginning to end. I was perfectly familiar with all the characters in that performance. Thus knowledge robs us of our pleasures.’

proaches, faints and falls into the water. She is rescued by the neighbouring swains, and conveyed to a cottage. There she is visited by Lycidas, the brother of Celadon, for whom a fruitless search is now made. Astrea pretends he had been drowned in attempting to save her, but her expressions of grief not answering the expectations of the brother, he upbraids her with indifference for the loss of so faithful a lover : Astrea pays a tribute to his virtues, but complains that he was a general lover, and in particular had forsaken her for Amynta. Lycidas now shrewdly conjectures that her jealousy has been the cause of his brother's death, and reminds her that Celadon, at her own desire, had made love to all the neighbouring shepherdesses, in order to conceal his real passion,—an arrangement which Astrea might have previously recollected, without any extraordinary powers of reminiscence. At the desire of Phillis and Diana, two of her companions, she is now induced to recount the progress of her affection for Celadon, and her whole history previous to the water-scene ; a recital in which unfortunately she gives no marks of that defect of memory she had so lately betrayed.

Astrea begins her narrative by describing with much minuteness the sensations, which, though

only twelve years of age, she felt on first meeting with Celadon. Soon after this interview the festival of Venus was celebrated. On this occasion it was customary that four virgins should represent the judgment of Paris, in the temple of the goddess. At this exhibition, the description of which is taken from the tenth book of Apuleius, males were prohibited from being present, on pain of being stoned to death. Celadon, however, obtained admission in disguise of a virgin, and the part of Paris was luckily assigned to him. The three nymphs (one of whom was Astrea), competitors for the prize of beauty, were submitted to his inspection in the *costume* in which their respective excellencies could be most accurately discriminated. Celadon had thus an opportunity of bestowing the prize on Astrea, and afterwards acquainted her with the risk he had encountered for her sake. An incident similar to this occurs in the Pastor Fido, and fifth book of the Rinaldo. In the former, Mirtillo, disguised as his sister, mingles at the festival of Jupiter, among a train of nymphs, who contend which should give the sweetest kiss; Amarillis, the mistress of Mirtillo, is chosen the judge, and receives the caresses of her lover among those of her fair companions. In Rinaldo the incident is similar to that of the ro-

mance, except that in the former the audacious intruder is detected by his mistress Olinda—in the latter he reveals the secret himself. A corresponding event, it will be recollected, has been mentioned in the abstract of the *Diana of Montemayor*.

Spite of this happy commencement, the final union of Celadon and Astrea was retarded by the enmity subsisting between their parents; for the father of Celadon having become acquainted with the passion of his son, sent him to travel in Italy during three years. At his return his affection was unchanged, but Semire having placed Astrea in a situation whence she beheld his apparent courtship of Amynta, her jealousy and treacherous memory gave rise to the sudden catastrophe with which the pastoral commences, and which has been already related.

About this time Astrea derived no slight consolation from the death of her father and mother, as the distress she assumed for their loss served as a cloak to her real grief, on account of the fate of Celadon: “ Presque au mesme temps elle perdit Alc   et Hypolite ses pere et merc—Hypolite pour la frayeur qu’ elle eut de la perte d’ Astr  e, lorsqu’ ella tomba dans l’eau; et Alc   pour le deplaisir de la perte de sa chere compagne, *qui toutefois*



*ne fut a Astrée un foible soulagement, pouvant plaindre la perte de Celadon sous la couverture de celle de son pere et de sa mere."*

While Astrca was thus solaced by the demise of her parents, Celadon resided in the castle of Issoura, in the society of the nymphs by whom he had been succoured. Galatea, the most beautiful of these, and sister to the sovereign of the district, neglected for his sake her two former lovers, one of whom was Polemas, regent of the country in the absence of her brother ; the other Lindamor, formerly her favoured admirer, who was now employed under his sovereign in a war against one of the neighbouring princes.

In spite, however, of this flattering preference, and the undeserved asperity with which he had been treated, the heart of Celadon still remained faithful to Astrea.

But as Galatea, according to the expression of D'Urfé, wished to whip him into affection, he found it necessary to escape from her lash. He was assisted in his elopement by Leonide, a nymph belonging to the court of Galatea, and instantly directed his flight to the banks of the Lignon. As his mistress, however, at parting, had forbidden him her presence, he fixed his residence in a wild cavern in the midst of a forest, and near the side

of the stream. Here he resolved to pass the remainder of his days, solacing himself with the hope of beholding Astrea without being seen by her, and by raising a small temple, which, from an allusion to her name, he dedicated to the Goddess of Justice.

One day, while accidentally wandering through a meadow, he saw a number of shepherdesses asleep, and among these he remarked Astrea. Not daring to appear before her, he adopted the expedient of writing a billet, which he left on her bosom; on awakening she had a glance of her lover as he disappeared, but believed she had seen his spirit, and the letter, in which he informed her that his remains were deposited in the neighbourhood, seemed to confirm this supposition.

The shepherds of Lignon formed a tomb for Celadon, to procure repose to his wandering shade, and shepherdesses gathered flowers, which they strewed on the imaginary grave. Three times the female druids called on his soul: the high-priest also bade him adieu, and though they supposed he had been drowned, prayed that the earth might rest lightly on him.

Leonide, the nymph who had aided Celadon in his escape from the court of Galatea, although she knew that he was yet alive, assisted at this cere-

mony. She also frequently visited the recluse in his cavern, and on one occasion brought her uncle, the Grand Druid Adamas, who had become acquainted with Celadon at the castle of Issoura. This druid was much interested in his fate, and, wishing to draw him from solitude, tried to persuade him to disobey the commands of his mistress, and to court instead of avoiding her presence. The fastidious lover being inflexible on this point, Adamas next proposed that he should come to his house in disguise of a girl, and assume the character of his daughter Alexis, who had now resided for eight years with the druids in the caverns of Carnutes. This plan was readily embraced by Celadon, who had scarcely arrived at the mansion of Adamas, when all the neighbouring shepherdesses, and among the rest Astrea, came to pay their respects to the daughter of the Grand Druid. Astrea did not recognise her lover, but was overpowered by a secret and inexplicable emotion. She remained for some time with the false Alexis, and afterwards resided with him at her own abode, in the cottage of Phocion, where she had dwelt since the death of her parents. The account of the friendship of this pretended female and Astrea, their sentimental conversations, and the freedoms in which the former was indulged,

form a considerable, but by no means an interesting portion of the romance.

While Celadon and Astrea were thus employed, Polemas, (who, it may be recollected, was the admirer of Galatea,) in order at once to accomplish his projects of ambition and love, raised an army, and besieged in the town of Marcilly the object of his passion, who, by the death of her brother, was now sovereign of the district. Adamas commanded in the city on the part of Galatea; and Polemas, as preparatory to his attack, had secured the person of the false Alexis, whom he believed to be the daughter of Adamas, in order that, by placing her in front of the assailants, the besieged might not repel the attack. Astrea, on the day in which Alexis was to be seized, had accidentally put on the garb of her companion, and was in consequence conveyed to the camp of Polemas, where she was soon after followed by Celadon. Both were placed in the van of battle. Astrea, when discovered by the besieged, was drawn into town by a pulley, while Celadon, turning on the assailants, greatly contributed to the discomfiture of Polemas. Lindamor afterwards came to the succour of Galatea, and killed Polemas in single combat.

Notwithstanding his late military exploits, Celadon still remained undiscovered by Astrea, and

they returned together to the solitary mansion of Adamas. At length, however, the nymph Leonide conducted Astrea to a grove, on pretence that she would there behold the shade of Celadon. After the pretended ghost-raiser had pronounced certain words of invocation, Alexis, who had accompanied them, fell at the feet of his mistress, and confessed the stratagem to which he had resorted. "Go," said the inexorable shepherdess, "and expiate by death the offence you have committed." Celadon begged her to specify what manner of death she wished him to undergo. She refused, however, to make any selection, and expressed a perfect indifference as to the mode of his death, provided it were speedily accomplished.

Being thus left to his own discretion, it occurred to Celadon that the most expeditious means of fulfilling the injunction of his mistress, was to repair to the lions which guarded the fountain of the Truth of Love, the work of the enchanter Merlin. These considerate animals, however, would not devour a person who was of pure heart, and who had never practised dissimulation. Celadon, in spite of his late disguise, was unfortunately regarded by them as being in this predicament, and was thus precluded from enjoying the local advantages to which he might have been otherwise entitled.

While in the dilemma occasioned by this unexpected abstinence on the part of the lions, Astrea reached the same spot as her lover. Repenting of her cruelty, she had come to the fountain with intentions similar to those of Celadon, but was much disconcerted to find herself caressed instead of being devoured, which was the more usual hospitality practised by the lions. Now, by inspecting the fountain, those who were in love saw their own image in the waters by the side of that of their mistress, if she was faithful; but if false, they beheld the figure of a more fortunate rival. Celadon and Astrea, while awaiting some favourable change in the sentiments or appetites of the lions, cast their eyes on the fountain, and each was instantly convinced of the sincerity of the other's attachment. Meanwhile the Grand Druid Adamas approached this singular scene, and addressed a fervent prayer to Cupid. After an alternation of light and darkness—of a storm which ruffled, and a calm which allayed the waters of the fountain, Cupid pronounced with proper effect an oracle, commanding the union of Celadon and Astrea. The lions, who had already evinced symptoms of approaching torpor, became the petrified ornaments of the fountain. Two faithful lovers, inspired with the intention of dying for

each other, had now approached its magic waters, which was the destined term prescribed to the enchantment.

The above is the principal story of this celebrated pastoral, and the next in importance comprehends the adventures of Sylvander and Diana. Sylvander, a shepherd, unfriended and unknown, arrives on the banks of the Lignon, and sighs in secret for the beautiful Diana. This nymph was at the same time beloved by Philander, who resided in the neighbourhood in the disguise of a girl, and who perished in a combat with a hideous Moor, while defending the honour of his mistress. Like Celadon, Sylvander repairs to the fountain of the Truth of Love, and is commanded to be sacrificed by the oracle of gentle Cupid. While he is zealously preparing to undergo this operation, he is discovered to be the son of the Grand Druid Adamas, from whom he had been carried off in infancy,—an incident evidently borrowed from the Pastor Fido.

It is well known, that in the adventures of Celadon and Astrea, of Sylvander and Diana, the author has interwoven the history of his own family. The allusions, however, the intended application of the incidents, and the characters he means to inculcate, have been matters of great dispute. This

ambiguity arises partly from the author often representing one real character under two fictitious names, and at other times distributing the adventures of an individual among a plurality of allegorical personages ; he also frequently alters the order of time, and comprehends within a few weeks incidents which occurred in the course of a number of years. We are informed by M. Patru, in a dissertation composed and published at the request of Huet, that while travelling through Italy he had visited M. D'Urfé, who then resided at Turin, and that the author had undertaken to explain to him the mysteries of the *Astrea*, if he would stay with him for some time on his return from the south of Italy. D'Urfé, however, died in the interval, and Patru was therefore only enabled to communicate what he was previously acquainted with, or what he had gleaned during his visit. Huet has farther developed the subject of D'Urfé and his romance, in a letter addressed to M. Scuderi, which is dated 1699, and forms the twelfth of the dissertations published by the Abbé Tilladet ; his information was collected from a Marquis D'Urfé, the last, I believe, who enjoyed the title, and Margaret D'Alegre, the widow of Charles Emanuel, nephew of the author of *Astrea*.



From these elucidations, it appears that Honore D'Urfé was of an illustrious family in France, that he was the fifth of six brothers, and was born near the spot where he has placed the scene of his *Astrea*. The barony of Chateaumorand, which was in the neighbourhood of his father's possessions, had descended to Diana of Chatcaumorand. A marriage was projected between this lady and Anne D'Urfé, the eldest of the brothers. During the preparations for the nuptials, Honore D'Urfé became passionately enamoured of the destined bride, which being perceived by his father, he sent him to Malta, that his attachment might be no interruption to the intended union. On returning he found his brother the husband of Diana, a situation he was ill qualified to possess, though he is said to have celebrated the beauty of his spouse in a hundred and forty sonnets. This nominal marriage was dissolved after a duration of ten, or, according to others, of twenty-two years. After this separation Diana was united to Honore, who now espoused her more from interest than love. He soon became disgusted with her, chiefly, it is said, on account of the large dogs by which she was constantly surrounded, and which she entertained at table, and admitted to bed,—a practice in which

she dogmatically persisted in spite of the representations of her husband. He forsook her and her canine companions, and retired to Piedmont, where he lived in great favour with the duke of Savoy, and composed his *Astrea*. Nor is it the least wonderful part of this strange history, that he should have employed his time in celebrating his adoration of a woman whom he had abandoned in disgust. Diana survived him many years. The nephew of the author informed Huet, that when he saw her, one could perceive she had been exquisitely beautiful, but even at an advanced age she idolized her charms, and, in order to preserve their remains, became extremely unsocial, shutting herself up from sun and wind, and only appearing in public under protection of a mask.

It is this family legend that the author is said to have transmitted to posterity in his pastoral romance. *Astrea* and *Diana* both figure *Diana of Chateaumorand*, while he has exhibited his own character under the names of *Celadon* and *Sylvander*. *Sylvander* is a poor shepherd, because the author was a younger son; he sighs in secret for *Diana*, because he was obliged to conceal his passion on account of the marriage of his brother. *Celadon* throwing himself into the *Lignon*, represents his voyage to *Malta*, and his vows of knighthood. *Galatea* is

Queen Margaret of Valois, and his detention in the castle of Issoura, refers to his having been taken prisoner during the league, by her guards, and conducted to her residence at the castle of Usson, where he made himself, it is said, very agreeable to her majesty; a circumstance to which some have attributed the dislike invariably expressed by Henry IV. to D'Urfé. Under the disguise of Alexis, he typifies the friendship Diana felt for him as her brother-in-law, and the innocent liberties in which they indulged. Philander, attired in the dress of a girl, is the elder D'Urfé. A Moor whom he dies combating, is a personification of conscience, which at length compelled him to relinquish the possession of Diana, if it deserves that name. The deliverance of Sylvander, when on the point of being sacrificed, is his hope of espousing Diana. Adamas is the ecclesiastical power, which dissolved the union of the elder D'Urfé. The fountain of the Truth of Loye is marriage, the final test of affection, and the petrified lions, are emblems of the inconveniences of matrimony, overcome by faithful attachment.

Besides the two stories which represent the family adventures of the D'Urfés, there are thirty-three long episodes containing the history of shepherds and shepherdesses, whom the more import-

ant characters meet while tending their flocks. Some of these are resident in the vicinity, others *have come from a distance by command of an oracle*, to consult the Druid on their amorous doubts and misfortunes. This frequently introduces, in addition to the story, long discussions on questions of love, which are at length decided by some distinguished and impartial shepherd.

It is well known that in these episodes and disquisitions, the author has represented the gallantries and fashionable scandal of the court of Henry IV. Thus, in the story of Daphnide, that shepherdess is the duchess of Beaufort; Alcidon, the duke of Bellegarde; Clarinte, the princess of Conti; Amintor, the duke of Maine; Alcyre, the count of Sommerive; Thorismond, Henry III., and Euric, king of the Visigoths, his amorous successor. This information was communicated to Patru by M. de Lamet, a confidant of the duke of Maine. With this key it is not difficult to comprehend the attachment of Daphnide and Alcidon—the intervening passion of Euric—the ambitious projects of Daphnide—the obstacles presented in the person of Clarinte to her elevation, and the various intrigues and devices by which she attempted to surmount them.

In another episode, Celidée, in order to cure her lover Thamire of his jealousy, disfigured her countenance by tearing it with a pointed diamond, a heroic exertion which increased the attachment of her lover. This alludes to the neglect with which a French prince treated his lady; but, having been imprisoned for state affairs, she followed him into confinement. There she was attacked by the small-pox, which is the pointed diamond, but though deprived of her charms, her self-devotedness and sufferings at length recalled the alienated affections of her husband.

To such temporary topics and incidents of real life, the *Astrea* was chiefly indebted for its popularity. The remembrance of these having passed away, the work must rest on its intrinsic merits, which, it would appear, are not such as to preserve it from oblivion. The criticism made on the romance at the time it was published, was, that it contained too much erudition, and that the language and sentiments were too refined for those of shepherds. "Sylvander," says a French writer, "fût le seul qui eut étudié à l'école des Massiliens, et Je ne sçais seulement comment ils pouvoient l'entendre, eux qui n'avoient pas fait leurs cours chez les Massiliens." D'Urfé seems to have an-

anticipated this last objection, as in his fanciful address to the shepherdess Astrea, prefixed to the first part of the work, he exculpates himself from this charge on the ground that his characters were not shepherds from necessity, but choice:—

“ *Responds leur ma Bergere! que tu n'es pas, ny celles aussi qui te suivent, de ces Bergeres necessiteuses qui pour gagner leur vie conduisent les troupeaux aux pasturages; mais que vous n'avez toutes pris cette condition que pour vivre plus doucement et sans contrainte: Que si vos conceptions et vos paroles estoient veritablement telles que celles des Bergeres ordinaires, ils auroient aussi peu de plaisir de vous ecouter que vous auriez beaucoup de honte à les redire; et qu' outre cela la plupart de la troupe est remplie d'Amour, qui dans l'Aminte fait bien paroistre qu' il change et le langage et les conceptions quand il dit—*

*Queste selve hoggi ragionar d'Amore  
S'udranno in nova guisa, e ben parassi,  
Che la mia Deità sia qui presente  
In se medesima, non ne suoi Ministri.  
Spirerò nobil sensi à rozzi petti;  
Radolcirò delle lor lingue il suono.”*

A chief defect in the Astrea, and what to a modern reader renders it insufferably tiresome, is

the long and languishing conversations on wire-drawn topics. The design, too, which obtained the work a temporary fame, was adverse to its permanent celebrity, as the current of romantic ideas must have been checked by the necessity of squaring the incidents to the occurrences of existing society. The adventures of D'Urfé's own life, which are presented under the disguise of rural incidents, have nothing in common with the innocence of the pastoral character; and the amours at the court of Henry the Great were singularly at variance with the artless loves of shepherds, and fidelity of rustic attachments.

Another fault in the *Astrea*, and one which, with the exception of *Daphnis and Chloe*, is common to all pastoral romances, is the introduction of war-like scenes, in a work which should be devoted to the description of rural felicity. Tasso and other poets have been much, and perhaps justly applauded, for occasionally withdrawing their readers from the bustle of arms to the tranquillity and refreshment of vernal delights; but the author is not equally worthy of praise, who hurries us from pastoral repose to the tumult of heroic achievements.

The work, however, certainly possesses some intrinsic merit, as it was the admiration of many grave and distinguished characters, who would not

have been merely enticed by the developement of the fashionable scandal of the day. An extravagant eulogium is pronounced on the *Astrea*, by Camus, bishop of Bèley, in his *Traité de l'Esprit de François de Sales*. Huet used to read the work with his sisters, and he informs us they were frequently forced to lay down the book to give vent to their tears ! At one period of his life, Rochefoucault (the author of the *Maxims*), passed his afternoons with Segrais, at the house of Madame La Fayette, where the *Astrea* was the subject of their studies. “ Que je regrets que ce sont là des Fables,” was the exclamation of a celebrated writer, when he had finished the perusal of the *Astrea*. Huet also mentions that it formed the basis of an epic poem of some reputation. An immense number of tragi-comic and pastoral dramas have likewise been formed from this work : In most of these the prose dialogue has been merely versified, but in others the far-fetched conceits and exaggerated sentiments of D'Urfé have been aggravated. Thus, in *Les Amours d'Astrée et de Celadon*, the preservation of Celadon, when he threw himself into the Lignon, is thus accounted for :

“ Mais le Dieu de Lignon pour lui trop pitoyable,  
 Contre sa volonté le jetta sur le sable,  
 De peur que la grandeur de feu de son amour,  
 Ne changeât en guerets son humide sejour.”



I shall conclude the remarks on pastoral romance, by the analysis of the

### ARCADIA

of Sir Philip Sidney, a work which was at one time much read and admired, not less perhaps on account of the heroic character and glorious death of its author, than its own intrinsic merit. This romance is sometimes named *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, as being written and dedicated to that "subject of all verse," who was the sister of Sidney: "Your dear self," says he in his dedication, "can best witness the manner of its writing, being done in loose sheets of paper, most of it in your presence; the rest by sheets, sent unto you as fast as they were done." The work, which was left incomplete, was published after the death of Sidney, and from the mode of its composition, and not having received his last corrections, cannot be supposed to have all the perfection which the author could have bestowed, had the length of his life, according to the expression of Sir W. Temple, been equal to the excellence of his wit and virtues. As it was written in an age when the features of the ancient Gothic romance were not entirely ob-

literated, it is of a mixed nature, being partly of a heroic description ; and it also contains a considerable portion of what was meant by the author as comic painting. It is in the epic form, beginning in the middle of the action, and, by the usual contrivances, rehearsing, in the course of the work, those events by which its opening had been preceded.

Basilius, king of Arcadia, had, when already well stricken in years, married a young princess, Gynecia, daughter to the king of Cyprus. "Of these two," says the narrator, "are brought to the world two daughters, so beyond measure excellent in all the gifts allotted to reasonable creatures, that we may think that they were born to show that nature is no step-mother to that sex, how much soever some men (sharp-witted only in evil speaking) have sought to disgrace them. The elder is named Pamela; by many men not deemed inferior to her sister : for my part, when I marked them both, methought there was (if at least such perfections may receive the name of *more*) more sweetness in Philoclea, but more majesty in Pamela : methought love plaid in Philoclea's eyes, and threatened in Pamela's : methought Philoclea's beauty only perswaded, but so perswaded as all hearts must yield, Pamela's beauty used violence,

and such violence as no heart could resist. And it seems that such proportion is between their minds: Philoclea so bashful, as though her excellencies had stolen into her before she was aware; so humble that she will put all pride out of countenance; in sum, such proceeding as will stir hope, but teach hope good manners. Pamela, of high thoughts, who avoids not pride with not knowing her excellencies, but by making that one of her excellencies to be void of pride; her mother's wisdom, greatness, nobility, but (if I can guess aright) knit with a more constant temper." (p. 10, ed. London, 1674.)

Basilus, thus in want only of something to make him uneasy, determined to visit the temple of Delphos, where the following poetical response was furnished as a subject for his lucubrations:

"Thy elder care shall from thy careful face  
By princely mean be stolen, and yet not lost;  
Thy younger shall with nature's bliss embrace  
An uncooth love, which Nature hateth most.  
Both they themselves unto such two shall wed,  
Who at thy bier-as at a bar shall plead  
Why Thee (a living man) they had made dead.  
In thine own seat a foreign state shall sit,  
And ere that all these blows thy head do hit,  
Thou with thy wife adultery shall commit."

Basilius, aghast at this puzzling denunciation, and endeavouring to prevent its fulfilment, retired from court to a forest in which he had built two lodges. In one of these he himself and his queen, with their younger daughter Philoclea, resided ; while in the other lived Pamela, whom her father had committed to the guardianship of Dametas, a conceited, doltish clown, whose wife Miso, and daughter Mopsa, are described as perfect witches in temper and appearance. The humours of this family form what is meant as the comic part of the romance.

At this period, Pyrocles, son of Euarchus, king of Macedon, and his cousin Musidorus, prince of Thessaly, two princes, such as are to be found only in romance, were, after unexampled deeds of prowess, shipwrecked on the coast of Arcadia. The former of these heroes becomes enamoured of Philoclea, and the latter of her sister Pamela. With the usual fondness of the princes of romance for disguise, when their own characters would have better suited their purpose, Musidorus, as a shepherd, named Dorns, becomes the servant of Dametas, who had charge of the Princess Pamela ; Pyrocles assumes the garb of an Amazon, with the name of Zelmene, and is thus admitted by Basilius

an inmate of his lodge. The situation, however, of Pyrocles (now Zelmane), was less comfortable than might have been supposed; for, on the one hand, he was pestered by the love of Basilius, and on the other by that of Queen Gynecia, who, seeing somewhat farther than her husband, suspected his sex, and would not leave him alone a single moment with Philoclea. The idea of a hero residing in a female garb with his mistress, and for a while unknown to her, which is a common incident in the *Argenis*, and other romances of the period, was perhaps originally derived from the story of Achilles: But that part of the *Arcadia* which relates to the disguise of Pyrocles, and the passion of the king and queen, has been immediately taken from the French translation of the 11th book of *Amadis de Gaul*, where Agésilas of Colchos, while in like disguise, is pursued in a similar manner by the king and queen of Galdap. It may not be improper here to mention the royal recreations, as giving a curious picture of the tenderness of ladies' hearts in the days of Queen Elizabeth. "Sometimes angling to a little river near ~~hand~~ which, for the moisture it bestowed upon the roots of flourishing trees, was rewarded with their shadow—there would they sit down, and pretty wagers be made between Pamela and Phi-

loclea, which could soonest beguile silly fishes, while Zelmane protested that the fit prey for them was hearts of princes. She also had an angle in her hand, but the taker was so taken that she had forgotten taking. Basilius, in the mean time, would be the cook himself of what was so caught, and Gynecia sit still, but with no still pensiveness. Now she brought them to see a sealed dove, who the blinder she was the higher she strove. Another time a kite, which having a gut cunningly pulled out of her, and so let fly, caused all the kites in that quarter," &c. &c p. 58.\*

It would be tedious, and could serve no good purpose, to analyze minutely the different books of the *Arcadia*. Musidorus was long counteracted in his plans by Dametas and his wife, and their ugly daughter Mopsa, to whom he was obliged to feign love, till, having at length discovered his rank to Pamela, he prevails on her to fly with him; but, after having gone a little way, they employ themselves in carving bad sonnets on the barks of trees. Meanwhile the king and queen separately attempt to bring matters to extremity with Zelmane. Tea-

\* Master Stow mentions similar *merry disports*, as forming the court amusements during the Danish ambassador's reception and entertainment at Greenwich, in 1587.

zed by their importunities, this ambiguous character gives an assignation to each of them in a certain cave at midnight, and promises there to grant their wishes. As Zelmane had foreseen, Basilius does not recognise the queen amid the obscurity of the cave, and thus accomplishes the last and most mysterious part of the prediction of the Delphic oracle. Being athirst, he unwarily drinks a philtre, which Gynecia had brought with her to the cave, for the purpose of increasing Zelmane's love. This draught gives him the appearance of being poisoned. While their majesties were engaged in this cave adventure, the imaginary Zelmane embraces the opportunity of visiting Philoclea, in his true character of Pyrocles, prince of Macedon, for the purpose of persuading her to fly with him; but after much discourse on the subject, both faint and fall asleep, so that in the morning the prince is discovered in male attire, in the chamber of Philoclea. Pamela and her lover are equally unsuccessful, and having lost much time in carving sonnets, they are surprised and brought back by soldiers.

The king still continued apparently in a lifeless state, and Gynecia in despair accuses herself as the cause of his death. The utmost confusion now arises in Arcadia. In this posture of affairs, Eu-

archus, king of Macedon, accidentally arrives on the coast. Philanax, protector of Arcadia, appoints him umpire in the ensuing trial, and he accordingly sits on the royal throne, thus explaining another Delphic enigma. Gynccia is condemned to be buried alive, along with the body of her husband, whom she confessed having poisoned. The trials of the princes ensue, and long pleadings take place in the viperous style of Sir Edward Coke. Pyrocles is condemned to be thrown from a tower, and his cousin to be beheaded; and these sentences the Macedonian king affirms, though he now discovers that one of the prisoners is his nephew, and the other his son. All are in the uttermost distress, when Basilius, whose corpse was in court, awakes from the effects of the philter, which had been only a sleep potion; and the oracle being thus fully accomplished, the two young princes are united to their mistresses.

Such is the outline of the story of the Arcadia. The heroic part of the romance consists in a detail of the exploits of Pyrocles and Musidorus, previous to their arrival in Arcadia; and in the description of a war carried on against Basilius, by his nephew Amphialus, whose mother had, at one time, craftily seized and confined the princesses. There are also some happy descriptions of jousts and tour-



naments. But the work is on the whole extremely tiresome, and its chief interest consists in the stately dignity, and often graceful beauty, of the language. "There is in the revolutions of taste and language," says Bishop Hurd (*Dialogues Moral and Political*, p. 157, ed. 1760), "a certain point which is more favourable to the purposes of poetry (and it may be added, of stately prose), than any other. It may be difficult to fix this point with exactness. But we shall hardly mistake in supposing it lies somewhere between the rude essays of uncorrected fancy on the one hand, and the refinements of reason and science on the other. And this I take to have been the condition of our language in the age of Elizabeth. It was pure, strong, and perspicuous, without affectation. At the same time the high figurative manner, which fits a language so peculiarly for the uses of the poet, had not yet been controuled by the prosaic genius of philosophy and logic." At the period to which the bishop alludes, the Italians were the objects of imitation, as the French have been since; and, together with the stately majestic step of their productions, the style of Sidney and his contemporaries has a good deal of their turgidity and conceit. I might select a number of beautiful descriptions from the *Arcadia*, as for example, the

much-admired passage in Book II., of Musidorus managing a steed. We have already seen the skill of the author in drawing characters ; and the following is a striking portrait of an envious man. "A man of the most envious disposition that I think ever infected the air with his breath, whose eyes could not look right upon any happy man, nor ears bear the burden of any body's praise : contrary to the nature of all other plagues, plagued with others' well-being : making happiness the ground of his unhappiness, and good news an argument of his sorrow : In sum, a man whose favour no man could win, but by being miserable," (p. 130). This character has been imitated and expanded in the 19th number of the Spectator. The following description of Pamela sewing is a pretty fair specimen of the kind of conceits scattered through the work. "For the flowers she had wrought carried such life in them, that the cunningest painter might have learned of her needle, which, with so pretty a manner, made his careers to and fro through the cloth, as if the needle itself would have been loth to have gone fromward such a mistress, but that it hoped to return thitherward very quickly again, the cloth looking with many eyes upon her, and lovingly embracing the wounds she gave it : the shears also were at hand to behead the silk that

was grown too short. And if at any time she put her mouth to bite it off, it seemed that where she had been long in making of a rose with her hands, she would in an instant make roses with her lips; as the lilies seemed to have their whiteness rather of the hand that made them, than of the matter whereof they were made, and that they grew there by the suns of her eyes, and were refreshed by the most comfortable air which an unawares sigh might bestow upon them."

It has already been mentioned, that what is meant as the comic part of this romance, consists in satire upon Dametas, chiefly on account of his love of agriculture, and the absurdities of his wife and daughter. But it is by no means happy; nor has the author been more successful in what is designed as pastoral in his romance. A band of shepherds is introduced at the close of each book, as waiting on Basilius, and singing alternately on amorous and rural subjects. There is not probably in any other work in our language a greater portion of execrable poetry, than may be found in the *Arcadia*, and this, perhaps, less owing to want of poetical talent in the author, than to his affectation and constant attempts to versify on an impracticable system. At the period in which he lived, it was thought possible to introduce into English

verse all the different measures that had been employed in Greek and Latin, and accordingly we have in the *Arcadia*, Hexameters, or, at least, what were intended by the author as such ; Elegiacs, Sapphics, Anacreontics, Phaleuciacks, Asclepiades, and, in short, every thing but poetry. The effect, indeed, is perfectly abominable.

Another affectation of the times, and to which in particular Sir Philip Sidney was led by his imitation of Sannazzaro, was the adoption of all the various quaint devices which have been introduced into Italian poetry. We have the *Terza rima*, the *Sestina*, *Canzone*, *Sonnets* and *Echos*, the greater part of which, owing to the constraint to which they reduced the author, are almost, and some of them altogether, unintelligible. In the whole *Arcadia* I recollect only two poems which reach mediocrity, and these have at least the merit of being truly in the Italian style. The first is a Sonnet on a Lady Sleeping ; the other is a Madrigal addressed to the Sun.

## I.

Lock up, fair lids, the treasure of my heart,  
 Preserve those beams this age's only light ;  
 To her sweet sense, sweet Sleep, some ease impart—  
 Her sense too weak to bear her spirits' might.

And while, O Sleep ! thou closest up her sight,  
 (Her sight where love did forge his fairest dart,)  
 O harbour all her charms in easeful plight !  
 Let no strange dream make her fair body start.  
 But yet, O Dream ! if thou wilt not depart  
 In this rare subject from thy common right,  
 But wilt thyself in such a seat delight—  
 Then take my shape, and play a lover's part,  
 Kiss her from me, and say unto her sprite,  
 Till her eyes shine & live in darkest night.

P. 364.

## II.

Why dost thou haste away,  
 O Titan fair ! the giver of the day ?  
 Is it to carry news  
 To Western wights, what stars in East appear,  
 Or dost thou think that here  
 Is left a Sun, whose beams thy place may use ?  
 Yet stay and well peruse  
 What be her gifts that make her equal Thee ;  
 Bend all thy light to see  
 In earthly clothes enclosed a heavenly spark :  
 Thy running course, cannot such beauties mark.  
 No, no, thy motions be  
 Hasten'd from us with bar of shadow dark,  
 Because that Thou, the author of our sight,  
 Disdain'st we see thee stain'd with other's light.

P. 368.

Such are the best productions of an author whom  
 Sir William Temple, in the land that had already

given birth to Shakspeare, and Spenser, and Milton; scrupled not to pronounce "the greatest poet and the noblest genius of any that have left writings behind them, and published in ours or any other modern language." (*Miscellanea*, part II.) The *Arcadia* was also much read and admired by Waller and Cowley, and has been obviously imitated in many instances by our early dramatists. The story of Plangus in the *Arcadia*, is the origin of Shirley's *Andromani* or *Merchant's Wife*, and of *Cupid's Revenge*, by Beaumont and Fletcher. That part of the pastoral where Pyrocles agrees to command the Helots, seems to have suggested those scenes of the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, in which Valentine leagues himself with the outlaws. An episode in the second book of the *Aréadia*, where a king of Paphlagonia, whose eyes had been put out by a bastard son, is described as led by his rightful heir, whom he had cruelly used for the sake of his wicked brother, has furnished Shakspeare with the underplot concerning Gloster and his two sons, in *King Lear*. There are in the romance the same description of a bitter storm, and the same request of the father, that he might be led to the summit of a cliff, which occur in that pathetic tragedy.

The Arcadia was also, as we learn from Milton, the companion of the prison hours of Charles I., whom that poet, in his *Iconoclastes*, reproaches with having stolen a prayer of Pamela to insert in his *Ikon Basiliké*. But whether the author of that production actually fell into this inadvertence, or whether his antagonist, who seems to have believed in its authenticity, procured the interpolation of the passage, that he might enjoy an opportunity of reviling his sovereign for impiety, and of taunting him with literary plagiarism, has been the subject of much controversy among the biographers of the English bard. (See Symmons's *Life of Milton*, p. 278, &c.)

## CHAPTER XII.

*Heroic Romance.*—*Polexandre.*—*Cleopatra.*—  
*Cassandra.*—*Ibrahim.*—*Clelie, &c.*

BOILEAU, and several other French writers, have deduced the origin of the heroic from the pastoral romance, especially from the *Astrea* of D'Urfé; and indeed Mad. Scuderi, in her preface to *Ibrahim*, one of her earliest productions, affirms that she had chosen the *Astrea* as her model. To that species of composition may, no doubt, be attributed some of the tamest features of the heroic romance, its insipid dialogues and tedious episodes; but many of the elements of which it is compounded must be sought in anterior and more spirited compositions.

Thus, we find in the heroic romance a great deal of ancient chivalrous delineation. Dragons,



necromancers, giants, and enchanted castles, are indeed banished : but heroism and gallantry are still preserved. These attributes, however, have assumed a different station and importance. In romances of chivalry, love, though a solemn and serious passion, is subordinate to heroic achievement. A knight seems chiefly to have loved his mistress, because he obtained her by some warlike exploit ; she formed an excuse for engaging in perilous adventures, and he mourned her loss, as it was attended with that of his dearer idol—honour. In the heroic romance, on the other hand, love seems the ruling passion, and military exploits are chiefly performed for the sake of a mistress : glory is the spring of the one species of composition, and love of the other ; but in both, according to the expression of Sir Philip Sidney, the heroes are knights who combat for the love of honour and the honour of love.

Much of the heroic romance has been also derived from the ancient Greek romances. The spirit of these compositions had been kept alive during the middle ages, and had never been altogether extinguished, even by the prevalence and popularity of tales of chivalry. The *Philocopo* of Boccaccio, said to have been composed for the entertainment of Mary, natural daughter of the king

of Naples, bears a close resemblance to the Greek romance. This work is taken from a French metrical tale of the 13th century, which has been imitated in almost all the languages of Europe, (Ellis's *Metrical Romances*, vol. iii.) In Boccaccio's version of this story, Florio, prince of Spain, falls in love with Blancafior, an orphan, educated at his father's court. To prevent the risk of his son forming an unequal alliance, the king sells the object of his attachment to some Asiatic merchants, and hence the romance is occupied with the search made for her by Florio, under the name of Philocopo. The work is chiefly of the tenor of the heroic romance, but it presents an example of almost every species of fiction. Heathen divinities appear in disguise, and the rival lover of Blancafior is transformed into a fountain: stories of gallantry are related at the court of Naples, which Florio visits, and the account of the gardens and seraglio of the Egyptian emir resembles the descriptions in fairy and oriental tales.

Theagenes and Chariclea was translated into French by Amyot, in 1547, and ten editions were printed before the end of the 16th century. The story of Florizel, Clareo, and the Unfortunate Ysea, a close imitation of the Clitophon and Leucippe, written originally in Castilian, was translated into

French in 1554, and soon became a popular production.

On the decline of romances of chivalry, it was natural to search for some species of fiction to supply their place with the public. The spiritual and pastoral romances were not sufficiently entertaining nor abundant for this purpose, and the sale of ten editions of the work of Heliodorus was a strong inducement to attempt something original in a similar taste. In pursuance of this new object, the writers of that species of fiction, which may be peculiarly entitled Heroic Romance, resorted in search of characters partly to classical and partly to Moorish heroes.

The adoption of the former may, perhaps, have been owing to Amyot's translation of Plutarch, in which there were many interpolations savouring of the author of "*La vie et faits de Marc Antoine Le Triumvir et de sa mie Cleopatre, traduité de l'historien Plutarque pour tres illustre haute et puissante dame Mad. Française de Fouez dame de Chateaubriand.*"

It was the well-known History of the Dissensions of the Zegrís and Abencerrages that brought the Moorish stories and characters into vogue in France. The Spanish writers attribute this work to a Moor, who retired into Africa after the con-

quest of Granada. His grandson, who inherited the MS., gave it, they say, to a Jew ; and he in turn, presented it to Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, count of Baylen, who ordered it to be translated by Genes Peres del Hita. This account, however, is extremely apocryphal. The knowledge, indeed, displayed by the author, concerning the tribes and families of the Moors settled in Granada before the conquest of that city by the monarchs of Castile, renders it probable that Genes del Hita consulted some Arabian MS. on the subject of the Moorish contentions ; but, on the other hand, the partiality to the Christian cause, which runs through the whole work, proves that the pretended translator was the original author of the greater part of the composition, and that it was first written in the Spanish language.

This production may be regarded as historical in some of the leading political incidents recorded, but the harangues of the heroes, the loves of the Moorish princes, the games and the festivals, are the superstructure of fancy. In these, however, national manners are faithfully preserved, and in the romance of Hita more information is afforded concerning the customs and character of the Moors than by any of the Spanish historians.

The work commences with the early history of Granada, but we soon come to those events that preceded and accelerated its fall—the competitions for the sovereignty, and dissensions of the factions of the Zegris and Abencerrages. Of these the former race sprung from the kings of Fez and Morocco; the latter descended from the ancient princes of Yemen. In this work, and all those which treat of the factions of Granada, the Zegris are represented as a fierce and turbulent tribe. On the other hand, the Abencerrages, while their equals in valour, are painted as the most amiable of heroes, endowed with graceful manners and elegant accomplishments. The Zegris, however, remained faithful to the cause of their country, while the Abencerrages, by finally enlisting under the banners of Ferdinand, were the chief instruments of the downfall of Granada. The Spanish monarch, availing himself of the Moorish dissensions, and of the valour of Don Rodrigo of Arragon, Grand Master of the Order of Calatrava, vigorously attacked Granada, and finally accomplished its ruin by means of the Abencerrages, who revolted to him in revenge for the unheard-of cruelties exercised on their race by one of their native princes. This work also presents the strange, though not uncommon, spectacle of a nation ex-

piring in the midst of revelry and amusement : the gates of its capital were assaulted by a foreign enemy—the energy of the people was employed, and their valour wasted in internal war, but nothing could interrupt the course of festivity. Every day brought fresh disaster without, and new bloodshed within ; but every vacant hour was devoted to carousals, and to idle and romantic gallantry. In the work of Hita there are also introduced a number of short poetical romances. Each festival and combat furnishes the author with a subject for these compositions ; some of which are probably the invention of Hita, while others apparently have been founded on Arabian traditions.

This romance, or history, was first printed at Alcala in 1604, and soon became extremely popular : there was no literal translation till the late one by M. Sané, but a close imitation, published early in the 17th century, is the origin of all those French romances which turn on the gallantries and adventures of the Moors of Granada, as the *Almahide* of Scuderi, &c.

But though the works above-mentioned may have supplied incidents to the writers of heroic romance, many of the pictures in that, as in every other species of fiction, have been copied from

the manners of the age. That devotion, in particular, to the fair sex, which exalted them into objects rather of adoration than of love, and which forms the chief characteristic of the heroic romance, was a consequence of the peculiar state of feeling and sentiment in the age of Louis XIV. Never was prince so much an object of imitation to his people as that monarch; and hence his courtiers affected the same species of gallantry, practised by a sovereign, who paid to beauty a constant and respectful homage, and whose love, if less chivalrous than that of Francis I., or less tender than that of Henry IV., had more *appearance*, at least, of veneration and idolatry. “C’est avec éclat et somptuosité,” says Segur (*Les Femmes*, vol. ii. p. 156,) “qu’ il (Louis XIV.) offre des hommages a la beauté. Forcé d’ aimer il fait une Divinité de l’ objet qu’ il exhausse, pour ne pas se rabaisser a ses propres yeux, et eleve la Femme devant laquelle il se prosterne. Nous l’ imitons tous a la ville et a la cour. Aucun roy n’ a donné le ton comme celui-ci, n’ a, comme lui influé sur la conduite, et presque sur les pensées. Notre galanterie a pris la teinte de respect pour le Sexe dont le monarque nous offre l’ exemple.”

We find, accordingly, that whether classical or

Moorish heroes be introduced, the general tone of the heroic romance is nearly the same. But, besides that exalted species of love which no severity could chill, and no distance diminish, for which no sacrifice was too great, and no enterprise too perilous, we always meet with the same interminable length—the same minute descriptions—the same tedious dialogue—the same interruptions to the principal narrative by stories interwoven with it, which perplex and distract the attention. The introduction of long and constantly recurring episodes, a wretched fecundity, which is a proof of real barrenness, is the great fault of the heroic romance.—“Eh mon Dieu,” said a celebrated philosopher, “si vous avez de quoi faire deux Romans, faites en deux, et ne les melez pas pour les gater l’ un l’ autre.”

I shall now, according to my plan, present the reader with a short account of some of the most celebrated of the Romans de longue Haleine, as they have been termed, which may be vulgarly translated *long-winded* romances.

Nearly all of these were written by three authors, Gomberville,<sup>\*</sup> Calprenede, and Madame Scuderi. The

<sup>\*</sup> See Appendix, No. 5.



## POLEXANDRE

of Gomberville, which was first published in 1632, and enjoyed a high reputation in the age of Cardinal Richelieu, was the earliest of the heroic romances, and seems to have been the model of the works of Calprenede and Scuderi. This ponderous work may be regarded as a sort of intermediate production between these later compositions and the ancient fables of chivalry. It has, indeed, a closer affinity to the heroic romance; but many of the exploits of the hero are as extravagant as those of a paladin or knight of the Round Table. In the episode of the Peruvian Inca, there is a formidable giant, and in another part of the work we are introduced to a dragon, which lays waste a whole kingdom. An infinite number of tournaments are also interspersed through the volumes. In some of its features Polexandre bears a striking resemblance to the Greek romance; the disposition of the incidents is similar; as in the Greek romance, the events, in a great measure, arise from adventures with pirates; and the scene is chiefly laid at sea or in small islands, or places on the sea coast.

Polexandre, the hero of this work, was king of the Canary Islands, and reigned over them soon after the discovery of America. In his early youth he had the good fortune to be captured by a piratical vessel fitted out from Britany, and being carried to France, he there received an education superior to what could have been reasonably expected in the seminaries of the Canary Islands.

After an absence of some years, Polexandre set out on his return to his own country. In the course of his voyage he approached the coast of Africa, where he learned that the hardy Abdelmelec, son of the powerful Muley Nazar, emperor of Morocco, had proclaimed a splendid tournament, with a view of procuring a general acknowledgment from all the heroes and sovereigns on earth, that Alcidiana, queen of the Inaccessible Island, was the most beautiful woman in the universe. The African prince, it is true, had never beheld Alcidiana, but he had fallen in love with this incomparable beauty by seeing her portrait. This notion of princes,—for it is a folly peculiar to them,—becoming enamoured of a portrait, the original of which is at the end of the world, or perhaps does not exist, seems to be of oriental origin. Thus, in the *Mille et un jours*, there is the

story of a prince, who, after a long search, discovers that the picture he adored was a representation of one of the concubines of Solomon.

The prince of the Canaries proceeds to the tournament, with the intention of contesting the general proposition laid down by Abdelmelec concerning the beauty of his mistress; but the view of the portrait makes such an impression on his heart, that so far from disputing the pre-eminence of Alcidiana, he combats Abdelmelec, in order to make him renounce his passion and his picture.

Having possessed himself of this trophy, Polexandre now returns to the Canary Islands, the declared admirer of Alcidiana. On his arrival there he finds that his sister had been lately carried off by corsairs. The king of Scotland, it is true, was in chase of the ravishers, but Polexandre did not conceive that his own exertions could, on that account, be dispensed with. While engaged in the pursuit of the pirates, he is driven by a storm into the mouth of a river in an unknown island. On disembarking, he finds that the country is delightful, and its inhabitants apparently civilized. A shepherd offers to conduct him to the nearest habitation: while on their way they observe a stag spring forth from a forest of cedars and palms, with an arrow in its shoulder. Instantly Polexandre

hears the sound of a horn, and beholds a chariot drawn by four white horses. This conveyance was open, and was in shape of a throne. It was driven by a beautiful woman, in the garb of a nymph, while another, still more resplendent, and who carried a bow and arrows, occupied the principal seat in this hunting machine. Though Po-lexandre enjoyed but a transient glance, he discovers, from the resemblance to the portrait, that this is the divine Alcidiana. The passion, of which he had already felt the first emotions, takes full possession of his soul, and he already begins to make ingenious comparisons between his own situation and that of the wounded stag, and mentally reproaches this animal with insensibility in avoiding the transport of being pierced by the arrows of Alcidiana. Po-lexandre, accordingly, resolves to remain on the island, and to disguise himself as a shepherd, that he might enjoy frequent opportunities of beholding the object of his passion. An old man, with whom he resided, informs him of every thing connected with the history of the queen. Among other topics, he mentions a prediction made soon after her birth, which declared that she was liable to the hazard of being united to a slave, who was to come from the most barbarous nation.

of Africa, but which, at the same time, promised the greatest prosperity to the kingdom, if she could resolve to accept him for a husband. In order to avoid the risk of this unworthy alliance, the princess remained, for the most part, immured in her palace. Polexandre, however, has occasional opportunities of seeing her, and at length enjoys the good fortune of preserving her life while she was engaged in her favourite amusement of hunting. This procures him admission to the palace, and his access to the presence of the queen is still farther facilitated by his suppressing a rebellion which had broken out in the island. He gradually insinuates himself into her confidence; and as she had discovered his rank from the rich gifts he bestowed on her attendants, she abates somewhat of that *hauteur*, which it seems was the distinguishing feature in her character. The romance is now occupied with the struggles that arise between this feeling and love, which are fully detailed in a very tiresome chapter, entitled *Histoire des divers sentimens d'Alcidiene*. At length Polexandre leaves the princess, in order to recover one of her favourite attendants who had been carried off by a Portuguese corsair. He soon sails to such a distance as to lose sight of

the Island of Alcidiana, which had received from enchantment the unfortunate property, that when once out of view it could never be regained.

The remaining part of the romance is occupied with the adventures of Polexandre in his fruitless attempts to *make* this invisible territory, and in his extirpation of those daring princes who aspired to the love of its queen. For this Beauty was beloved by all the monarchs on earth : even those who could not pretend to her in marriage proclaimed themselves her admirers ; and knights, though at the extremity of the globe, rigorously abstained from looking on any woman after having viewed the portrait of Alcidiana. One would think even a princess must be somewhat whimsical to take umbrage at such remote courtship, nevertheless Alcidiana had been grievously offended. She had been shocked that the khan of Tartary, the prince of Denmark, and the emperor of Morocco, had paid her the most distant devotion. To adore Alcidiana, though her residence was inaccessible, and her worshippers at the distance of a thousand miles, was a deadly offence for all but Polexandre. This prince, meanwhile, traverses different parts of the globe in quest of the Inaccessible Isle, but his adventures are chiefly laid in Africa, and near-

*ly one half of the romance is occupied with Moorish episodes.*

At length Polexandre arrives at a country on the banks of the Niger, the monarch of which was wont to despatch to the temple of the Sun, an annual cargo of persons who were to be ranked among the slaves of that divinity. Polexandre begs leave to accompany this mission in the disguise of a slave, as he knew that Alcidiana sent thither an yearly offering. By this device he regains the Inaccessible Isle in the vessel that brought the tribute, and which invariably steered the right course by enchantment. On his arrival at the island of his mistress, he finds it overrun by a Spanish army, which had been sent under the Duke Medina Sidonia, for the purpose of subjugating the Canary Islands ; but the armada having been driven on the Inaccessible Isle, the land forces had meanwhile attempted its conquest. Polexandre, who is at first unknown, gains some splendid successes over the Spaniards, and a belief is spread through the island that the African slave alluded to in the prediction, and whose alliance with their princess was to be the forerunner of so much prosperity, had at length ad. The approach of a second Spanish fleet,

and the increasing dangers of the kingdom, induce the inhabitants to insist that Alcidiana should fulfil the prophecy. By the importunities of her people, she is at length forced to fix a day for the performance of the nuptial ceremony. Polexandre, to the infinite joy of the princess, discovers himself at the altar, and the same day witnesses the destruction of the Spanish armies, the conflagration of their fleet, and the union of Polexandre with Alcidiana.

The above is an outline of the chief materials of this romance, but the events are arranged in a totally different order from that in which they have been here related. Like the writers of Greek romance, the author,

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In medias res  
Non secus ac notas auditorem rapit,

which makes a great part of his work more unintelligible than it would otherwise be, from our consequent ignorance of the circumstances and situation of the principal characters, and the allusions contained in their tedious conversations.

A sketch of this romance was first published by the author under the title of *L'Exil de Polexandre*. It was afterwards enlarged to its present



bulk of five volumes, each of which contains about twelve hundred pages, and to every volume an adulatory dedication is prefixed. One of these addresses contains a hint of the author having some political meaning in the romance. There is nothing, however, of this sort apparent, except a general wish to depreciate the character of the Spaniards and the lower orders of society.

Gomberville, the author of *Polexandre*, also commenced the story of

### LE JEUNE ALCIDIANE,

the son of *Polexandre* and *Alcidiana*, which was subsequently finished by *Mad. Gomez*. Soon after the birth of this prince, a hermit, who piqued himself on inspiration, revealed that he was destined to slay his father. The romance is occupied with the means adopted to prevent the completion of this prediction.

Gomberville, besides his *Polexandre* and *Le Jeune Alcidiane*, is also the author of two romances, of no great merit or celebrity, entitled *Caritée* and *Cytherée*.

Of the writers of the description with which we

are now occupied, Calprenede<sup>1</sup> is certainly the best. The French critics are divided concerning the superiority of his *Cleopatra* or *Cassandra*, but to one or other the palm of the heroic romance is unquestionably due.

### CLEOPATRA

was first published in parts, of which the earliest appeared in 1646, and when completed, the whole was printed in twelve volumes 8vo. The capacity of the author in extending his work to such unmerciful length need not be wondered at, as it, in fact, comprehends three immense, and, in a great measure, unconnected romances, with about half a dozen minor stories or episodes, which have little relation to the three main histories, or to each other. Indeed the plan of the author is nearly the same as if Richardson, instead of forming three novels of his *Pamela*, *Sir Charles Grandison*, and *Clarissa*, had chosen to interweave them in a single work, giving the name of any one of them to the whole composition. That such a scheme has been completely adopted in the ro-

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, No. 6.

mance now before us, will appear from the following sketch.

The shades of night had not yet given place to the first blushes of day, when the disconsolate Tyridates, awakened by his cruel inquietude, and unable to await the approaching light, left his solitary mansion to refresh his languishing frame, and breathe his amorous thoughts on the shore of Alexandria.

After some time he perceives a great conflagration on the sea, which he concludes must proceed from a burning vessel, and he is naturally led to compare the flames to those by which he is himself consumed. 'Ah, devouring flames!' exclaims he, 'ye act your part with less power and cruelty than mine. If ye be not soon quenched, the materials will fail that feed your fury, but the flames find in my soul perpetual fuel; I have no hope of relief from a contrary element, no prospect of the end of such a substance as may ever burn without consuming.'

This ardent lover continued his rhapsody till the approach of light, when he saw coming towards land a plank, on which was seated the queen of Ethiopia, with one of her maids of honour, while her prime minister was swimming behind, and impelling it to shore. Tyridates plunged amid the

waves to their assistance, and, bidding the prime minister, who was nearly exhausted, provide for his own security, took his place at the plank, by which means all parties arrived safe on land.

The chief of the two ladies resembled Venus, newly sprung from the womb of Thetis, and would have been mistaken by Tyridates, for a sea-goddess, had he not seen the waves use her too rudely to be her subjects. On reaching shore, the first concern of the lady was to faint, and the waiting-woman, who, as Puff says, must always do as her mistress, and who on the present occasion had the same title to a swoon, instantly fell at her feet. When they had recovered, they were conducted, along with Eteocles, the person who attended them, to the solitary mansion of Tyridates, which stood in the immediate vicinity.

After the queen had enjoyed a few hours of repose, she was waited on by her host, whom she entreated to relate the story of his life. Tyridates declared that this would oblige him to disclose what he had resolved to hold secret as long as his breast would contain it, and that even by the acknowledgment of his name, he would incur the danger of his life. Waving, however, these considerations, he informed her that he was brother

to Phraates, king of Parthia. That prince ascended the throne by the murder of his father, and all the rest of his family, with the exception of Tyridates, who escaped to a neighbouring court, and afterwards settled in Judaea, whose king, Herod, was the avowed enemy of Phraates. The story of Mariamne, as it is related in Josephus, is the basis of the adventures of Tyridates. A coolness subsisted on the part of this princess towards her husband, as he had recently put to death her father Alexander, her uncle Antigonus, her two grandfathers, and her brother Aristobulus. Tyridates fell desperately in love with Mariamne, but although she preserved her fidelity to Herod inviolate, Salome, that monarch's sister, in revenge for an ill-requited affection she had conceived for Tyridates, and from hatred to Mariamne, instilled the most fatal suspicions into the mind of her brother. It thus became necessary, both for the safety of Mariamne and his own, that Tyridates should seek refuge in some other country. He had first repaired to Rome, but as the splendour and gaiety of that capital ill accorded with the frame of his mind, he had betaken himself to the solitary dwelling which he now inhabited.

In return for this communication, the attendant of the queen of Ethiopia commences the history of

the life of his mistress, which is one of the three main stories in the work. It relates to her amours with Cæsario, son of Julius Cæsar and Cleopatra, who had been believed dead through the Roman empire, but had, in fact, escaped into Ethiopia after the ruin of Marc Antony.

About this time, Coriolanus, prince of Mauritania, arrived at the mansion of Tyridates, and his story may be considered as the principal one in the romance, as his mistress, Cleopatra, gives name to the work. This prince was son of the celebrated Juba, and, after the death of his father, was educated at Rome. There he became enamoured of Cleopatra, the daughter of the queen of Egypt and Marc Antony ; but disgusted by the preference which Augustus showed to his rival Tiberius, he one day seized an opportunity of running his competitor through the body on the street, and then fled into Mauritania. He there raised a revolt among his father's subjects, and having successively defeated the Roman commanders who were sent against him, was invested by the inhabitants with his paternal sovereignty. After his coronation he set out *incognito* for Sicily, where the court of Augustus then was, in order to have a private interview with his mistress ; but as she reproached him for perfidy, and avoided his pre-

sence, instead of receiving him with the kindness anticipated, he was, in consequence, thrown into a violent fever. Understanding, on his recovery, that Cleopatra had accompanied Augustus and his court to Egypt, he departed for Alexandria, in order to obtain an explanation of her expressions and conduct.

The romance now returns to the queen of Ethiopia, who, during her residence with Tyridates, was forcibly carried off by pirates, but was afterwards rescued by Cornelius Gallus, the prefect of Egypt, and conducted to Alexandria. In the palace of the prefect she met with Elisa, who was daughter of Phraates, king of Parthia, and, like herself, had been delivered by a Roman vessel from pirates. The story of Elisa, and her lover Artabanus, a young adventurer, who afterwards proves to be the son of the great Pompey, is the third grand narrative of this production. Artabanus is the most warlike and most amorous of all the heroes of romance, and for the sake of Elisa he conquers for her father immense empires in Asia, almost by his individual prowess.

It is impossible to follow the princes and princesses through the various adventures and vicissitudes they encounter: suffice it to say, that at length they are all safely assembled at Alexandria,

where Augustus also arrives with his court, and a reconciliation takes place between Coriolanus and Cleopatra. The designs of the emperor to obtain the Princess Elisa for his favourite Agrippa, and Cleopatra for Tiberius, to the prejudice of Artaban and Coriolanus, induce these lovers to excite an insurrection against the Roman power. They storm the castle of Alexandria, but are there besieged by Augustus, and soon reduced to extremity. The emperor, however, terrified by a menacing apparition of Julius Cæsar, which about this time had unexpectedly appeared to him, consents to pardon the princes, and unites them to the objects of their affections.

This conclusion of the romance is as unsatisfactory as any conclusion of such a work could be. We are vexed that the principal characters should owe their lives and happiness to the bounty of a capricious tyrant, by whom they had been previously persecuted. Had they forced him to agree to terms, or made their escape from his power, the winding up of the whole would have been infinitely more agreeable. The great fault, however, of the romance, is the prodigious number of insulated histories, which prevent the attention or interest from fixing on any one object. Cleopatra is different from all heroic romances in this, that



the others have one leading story, and a number of episodes; but in the work with which we have just been engaged, though there is no want of episodes, there are three main stories, which have no intimate connection with each other, and which claim an equal share of the reader's attention. Indeed, that part of the romance which relates to the adventures of the nominal heroine, is neither the longest nor best managed part of the work. Her lover is a less interesting character than either Artaban or Cæsario: he stabs his rival on the street, excites his father's subjects to revolt, and then abandons them to the mercy of the Romans.

In the innumerable stories of which the romance is compounded, there is, I think, but little variety. Thus in all of them incomparable princes are eternally enamoured of divine princesses, to whom they pay a similar species of adoration, and for whose sake they perform similar exploits. In the character of the heroines there is little discrimination. The only distinction is in the species of personal perfection attributed to each of them; thus the majestic graces of the Ethiopian princess are contrasted with the softer charms of Elisa. The vast number of lovers attached to every one of the heroines fatigues the attention and perplexes the story. Besides inferior slaves, each of the chief

female characters has three or four important and passionate admirers. Cleopatra is beloved by Tiberius, Coriolanus, and Artaxus. Candace, the Ethiopian queen, by Cæsario, Tyribasus, Gallus, and the pirate Zenodorus. Elisa, by Artaban, Tigranes, and Agrippa.

Of this romance the basis is historical, but few of the incidents are consistent with historical truth. Yet they do not revolt the credence of the reader, because they are not in contradiction to known historical facts, and are such as might have occurred without being noticed in the authentic chronicles of the period. We can easily conceive that Cæsario, instead of being murdered, as was intended by his enemies, had escaped into Ethiopia, and that Pompey had a posthumous son, who served in the army of an Asiatic monarch. The revolt in Mauritania, however, and the coronation of Coriolanus by his father's subjects, is an exception to this remark. It is well known that the son of Juba owed his elevation to the favour of Augustus, and hence the event recorded in the romance is instantly rejected as absurd and fictitious.

The speeches and dialogues, though often prolix, frequently rise to eloquence, and paint in admirable language the emotions of dignity and ten-

derness. The sentiments are not numerous, and are generally far-fetched and exaggerated.

Cleopatra, like most of the other heroic romances of this period, has given rise to several English dramas, as *The Young King*, by Mrs Behn ; *Gloriana*, or *the Court of Augustus Cæsar*, by Lee ; and several others, all which partake of the fustian and forced elevation of the work from which they are derived.

Calprenede, the author of *Cleopatra*, also wrote

### CASSANDRA,

a romance which possesses nearly similar beauties and defects with his former production.

In this work we are informed, that on the banks of the river Euphrates, not many miles from Babylon, two strangers alighted from their horses. He who, by the richness of his arms, and the respect the other bore him, appeared to be the master, commences the business of the romance by lying down upon the grass, and burying all disquiets that troubled him in a profound sleep. From this state of forgetfulness he is roused by the clang of arms, occasioned by a combat between two

knights. He interposes his good offices by successively attacking the combatants, one of whom at length makes his escape. The black arms and sable plume of him who remains, witnessed the grief that was in his heart, but our mediator was ignorant of his name and the cause of his discontent, till he declared that he was the unfortunate Lysimachus, and that the person whom he had so recently combated was Perdiccas, the murderer of the fair Statira, widow of Alexander the Great, and of her sister the divine Parisatis. On hearing this intelligence, the person to whom it was communicated instantly fell on his sword, whence Lysimachus conjectured that he took a peculiar interest in the fate of one or other of these beauties. The wound, however, not proving mortal, he is carried to the house of one Polemon, in the neighbourhood, and, while recovering at leisure, his squire agrees to favour Lysimachus with the detail of his master's adventures. His name was Oroondates, and his birth the most illustrious in the world, as he was the only son of the great king of Scythia. A mortal enmity and perpetual warfare subsisted between that sovereign and Darius. In one of these wars, of which the seat was on the Araxis, Prince Oroondates, who was then entering on his military career, made a nightly

excursion, with a few chosen friends, into the Persian camp, and having entered a tent, beheld, by the light of a thousand tapers, a troop of ladies, among whom were the Great Queen and Statira, who was daughter of Darius; and the most perfect workmanship of the gods. The prince retired with protestations of respect, but carried away with him a love, which induced him, when the armies retired into winter quarters, to repair in disguise, and under the assumed name of Orontes, to the court of Persepolis, "where she," says the romance, "who had charmed him in a slight field habit, by the light of a few torches in the terrors of night, and apprehensions of captivity, now appeared in broad day, covered with jewels, and seated on a stately throne, all glorious and triumphant." The pretended Orontes was treated with much kindness by the Persian monarch, with the warmest friendship by his son Artaxerxes, but with much severity by the Princess Statira, and with a partiality he did not covet, by her cousin Roxana.

Intelligence now arrived of the Scythian invasion, and the approach of Alexander to the Granicus. It was resolved in the cabinet of Persepolis, that the latter should be opposed by the king in person, and that Artaxerxes, assisted by expe-

rienced commanders, should repel the inroad of the Scythians. Oroondates now revealed his real name and quality to Artaxerxes and the Princess Statira, by whom his suit was now more patiently listened to, and, preferring the interests of his love to those of his country, he resolved to accompany and aid Artaxerxes in the ensuing campaign. In return, Artaxerxes could not do less than spare the Scythians in the ensuing battle; and he, in consequence, repelled an attack so feebly, that he was overpowered, and believed dead by Oroondates, who, having been cured of the ten wounds he had received in this combat, and the Scythians having drawn off their forces, returned to Persia, to serve Darius in his wars against Alexander—contests well fitted to become the subject of romance. The overthrow of the Persian empire is the most magnificent subversion recorded in the annals of history. The monarchy of Alexander had been split into insignificance before it was destroyed, and the Roman power had melted to a shadow before it entirely disappeared; but Darius fell “from his high estate” when the throne of Cyrus shone with undiminished lustre. There is something, too, so august in the Persian name, something so chivalrous in the character of Alexander, and so miraculous in his exploits, that the

whole is calculated forcibly to awaken those sentiments of admiration, which it is a chief object of fiction and romance to inspire. We have a splendid description previous to the battle of Issus of the Persian army, of which the *materiel* consisted of the sacred fire, borne on silver altars by three hundred and sixty-five magi, clothed in purple robes—the car of Jupiter and the Horse of the Sun—Golden chariots which conveyed the queen and princesses, and the Armamaxa of the royal household. Previous to the battle, Darius addressed his army in an animated harangue; in which he conjured them, by their household gods, by the eternal fire carried on their altars, by the light of the sun and memory of Cyrus, to save the name and nation of the Persians from utter ruin and infamy, and to leave that glory to their posterity which they had received entire from their ancestors. The romance is now occupied with the events of the campaign, the stratagems resorted to by Oroondates to obtain interviews with Statira after her captivity, and the jealousy excited in her breast, and in that of her lover, by the artifices of Roxana.

After the death of Darius, Oroondates returned to Scythia, where, on account of his treason, he was imprisoned by his father, and the chief admi-

nistration of affairs intrusted to a stranger, called Arsaces, a young man of unknown birth, but of distinguished wisdom and valour. Arsaces, however, having fallen into disgrace, Oroondates, at the end of two years, was released, and appointed to command an army, which was destined to repel an inroad of the Macedonians. This expedition was eminently successful, and, among the Greek prisoners, Oroondates discovered an eunuch, the confidant of Statira, who removed all his former suspicions as to the fidelity of that princess, but informed him, that while impressed with a conviction of his inconstancy, she had accepted the hand of Alexander. On receiving this information, the Scythian prince set out for Susa, where he had an interview and explanation with his mistress. Thence he departed for Babylon, where Alexander then held his court, in order to force him, by single combat, to resign Statira; and on his journey to that city he had met with Lysimachus on the banks of the Euphrates, as related in the beginning of this romance.

Lysimachus now commences the recital of his adventures, which, besides his warlike exploits in the service of Alexander, consist of his love for Parisatis, the sister of Statira; his rivalship with Hephestion, who obtained the princess by the in-



terest of Alexander ; the renewal of his hopes subsequent to the death of that favourite ; and his pursuit of Perdiccas, (by whom he imagined the Persian princesses had been destroyed,) till the period when his combat with that traitor had been interrupted by Oroondates.

Thalestris, queen of the Amazons, being at this time in search of a fugitive lover, whose delicacy had been wounded by her well-known embassy to Alexander, also arrives on the banks of the Euphrates, and prefaces the narrative of her adventures by a recapitulation of the Amazonian history from the time of the Trojan war.

Berenice, the sister of Oroondates, who had been carried off by Arsacomes, one of her father's courtiers, is rescued by her brother from the power of this forward lover about the same period, and conducted to the royal receptacle on the banks of the Euphrates.

On the first arrival of Oroondates at the house of Polemon, two young women, in simple habits, who were called Cassandra and Euridice, resided in that habitation, but had subsequently disappeared. They were mistaken for common boarders by the princes ; and their presence and departure excited no peculiar interest, till the arrival of a confidant of the Persian family, who came to ac-

quaint Oroondates that the former of these ladies was the stately Statira, and the latter the peerless Parisatis. The names of Cassandra and Euridice, which they assumed, were those they had borne while in a private station, but which they had changed when their father mounted the throne of Persia, for the more regal appellations of Statira and Parisatis. These princesses had not, as was believed, fallen victims to the fury of Roxana and Perdiccas, but had been preserved by a stratagem of that general, who was enamoured of Statira, from the rage of Roxana; they had been secreted by him in the house of Polemon, but had afterwards been carried away by his orders, on pretence of a regard to their safety, before they could obtain an opportunity of disclosing their real quality to Oroondates.

For the deliverance of these princesses, preparations are now made by Oroondates, Lysimachus, and their adherents, against the party of Roxana and Perdiccas. In this contest, the chief support of the enemy was Arsaces. At length, however, this commander is severely wounded in single combat with Oroondates, and brought prisoner to the camp, where, during his recovery from his wound, he is discovered to be no other than Artaxerxes, prince of Persia, who was believed by Oroondates

and the rest of the world to have perished in the battle with the Scythians. The adventures of Artaxerxes, which occupy a great part of the romance, have too close a resemblance to those of the principal character. He had only fainted from loss of blood, and his life had been saved by a noble Scythian. After he had been cured of his wounds, he fell in love with Berenice, princess of Scythia. On account of the hostility of his family to that of his mistress, he assumed the name of Arsaces, and under this appellation he had performed distinguished services for her country, while his father's empire was subjugated by Alexander. The princess at length being carried off by that lover, from whose violence her brother had rescued her, Arsaces set out in quest of his mistress. In the neighbourhood of Babylon he learned that Berenice was detained in the camp of Lysimachus, and not knowing that her brother (who at this time did not bear the name of Oroondates) was there also, he had naturally enough associated himself to the party of Perdiccas. Now, however, he feels eager to co-operate with dearer friends, who, animated by this assistance, proceed to the assault of Babylon, where they understand that the Persian princesses are confined. In the first attack Oroondates is unfortunately taken prison-

er. Perdiccas requires that he should be put to death, in order to aid his suit with Statira. This is opposed by Roxana, who demands, for similar reasons, that Statira should be sacrificed : an internal commotion arises between their partizans, and the besieging army, availing itself of this dissension, bursts into Babylon, discomfits both parties, and rescues the Scythian hero and Persian princess in the very crisis of their fate. Lysimachus is united to Parisatis. Oroondates, accompanied by his divine Statira, departs for Scythia, to the throne of which he had succeeded by the recent demise of his father. The Persian prince, renouncing for ever the name of Artaxerxes, espouses Berenice under that of Arsaces : being subsequently assisted with forces from his brother-in-law, he conquered many provinces, and became that great Arsaces who founded the empire of the Parthians.

Rousseau informs us, in his Confessions, that in his boyhood much time was devoted by him to the perusal of heroic romance. He acknowledges that he and his father used to sit up during night poring over the adventures of Oroondates, till warned by the chirping of the swallows at their window of the approach of day. Accordingly, many incidents

of the Heloise may be traced in these romances. Thus in the *Cassandra*, with which we have been last engaged, there may be found the origin of that part of the Heloise, where St Preux, while his mistress lies ill of the small-pox, glides into the room, and approaches the bed, that he too may partake of the infection and danger. Julia, when she recovers, is impressed with a confused idea of having seen him, but whether in a vision or in reality she cannot determine.

Calprenede, who wrote *Cassandra*, is also author of the romance of

### PHARAMOND,

which turns on the love of that founder of the French monarchy, for the beautiful Rosemonde, daughter of the king of the Cimbrians, and the cruel necessity to which he saw himself reduced, of defending his dominions from her invasions, and those formidable rivals she had raised up against him, who were enamoured of her beauty, or ambitious of the Cimbrian throne.

In this hostility she long, but unwillingly, persevered, on a scruple of conscience, as it had been enjoined her on his death-bed by her father, who

was the mortal enemy of Pharamond; but she is at length pacified, on its being discovered that that monarch was not, as supposed, the murderer of her brother,—a belief which formed the chief cause of enmity.

Lee's tragedy of Theodosius, or the Force of Love, is taken from the romance of Pharamond. The story of Varanes, which forms the chief plot of that drama, may be found in the third book of the third part.

The whole romance, however, which bears the title of Pharamond, is not the work of Calprenede: He only wrote the seven first volumes, the remaining five having been added by Pierre de Vaumoriere, who was also author of several romances of his own, as *Le Grand Scipion*, which is reckoned the best of his productions.

It is no doubt extraordinary, that such tedious and fantastic compositions as the romances of Gomberville and Calprenede should have attained the popularity they so long enjoyed; but while readers could be procured, we cannot wonder that authors were willing to persist in this species of writing; for, as Dr Johnson has remarked, “when a man by practice had gained some fluency of language, he had no farther care than to retire to his closet, let loose his invention, and heat his mind

with incredibilities. A book was thus produced without the toil of study, without knowledge of nature, or acquaintance with life."

The most voluminous writer of heroic romance is Madame Scuderi,<sup>1</sup> of whose numerous productions, the earliest is

### IBRAHIM, OU L'ILLUSTRE BASSA,

first published in 1635. The hero of this romance was grand vizier to Solyman the Magnificent. In his youth he had been enamoured of the princess of Monaco, but, overwhelmed with grief by a false report of her infidelity, he had abandoned Genoa, his native country, and having travelled through Germany, embarked on the Baltic Sea to seek an honourable death in the wars of Sweden. This design met with an interruption which no one could have anticipated—he was captured by the Dey of Algiers, who happened to be cruising in the Baltic in person! In recompence, however, of this disaster, his subsequent good fortune was equally improbable; for having been sold as a slave at Constantinople, and condemned to death

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, No. 7.

on account of an attempt to recover his freedom, the daughter of Solyman happened to be at her window to witness the execution, and being struck with the appearance of the prisoner, not only procured his pardon, but introduced him to her father, who, after conversing a long while on painting, mathematics, and music, appointed him Grand Vizier. In this capacity he vanquished the Sophy of Persia, and made prodigious havoc among the rebellious Calenders of Natolia. At length, however, having learned that the rumour concerning the inconstancy of the princess was without foundation, he returned to Italy, and offered the proper apologies to his mistress; but, as he had only a short leave of absence, he again repaired to Constantinople. Thither he is shortly afterwards followed by the princess, of whom Solyman at first sight becomes so deeply enamoured, that soon after her arrival, the alternative is proposed to her of witnessing the execution of Ibrahim, or complying with the desires of the sultan. In this dilemma, the lovers secretly hire a vessel and sail from Constantinople. Their flight, however, is speedily discovered; they are pursued, overtaken, and brought back. The sultan now resolves to inflict both the punishments of which he had formerly left an option: the princess is condemned



to the seraglio, and Ibrahim receives a visit from the mutes. Suddenly, however, Solyman recollects having on some occasion sworn that, during his life and reign, Ibrahim should not suffer a violent death. On this point of conscience the Grand Seignior consults the mufti, who being a man *plein d'esprit et de finesse*, as it is said in the romance, suggests, that as sleep is a species of death, the grand vizier might be strangled without scruple during the slumbers of the sultan.

At an early period of the evening, Solyman went to bed with a fixed design of falling asleep, but spite of all his efforts he continued wakeful during the whole night, and, having thus time for reflection, he began to suspect that the mufti's interpretation of his oath was less sound than ingenious. The lovers were accordingly pardoned, and a few days after were shipped off for Genoa, loaded with presents from the emperor.

Nothing can be more ridiculous than the conclusion of this romance, particularly the decision of the mufti, and the somniferous attempts of his master. The sudden revolution, too, in the mind of the latter, by which alone the lovers are saved, is produced by no adequate cause, and is neither natural nor ingenious. The whole romance is loaded with tedious descriptions of the interior of

Turkish and Italian palaces, which has given rise to the remark of Boileau, that when one of Mad. Scuderi's characters enters a house, she will not permit him to leave it till she has given an inventory of the furniture. An English tragedy, entitled *Ibrahim, or the Illustrious Bassa*, is founded on this romance. It was written by Elkanah Settle, and printed in 1677.

No hero of antiquity has been so much disfigured as Cyrus by romance. Ramsay, we have already seen, has painted him as a pedantic politician. The picture represented in the

### ARTAMENES, OU LE GRAND CYRUS,

of Mad. Scuderi, bears still less resemblance to the hero of Herodotus, the sage of Xenophon, or the king announced by the Hebrew prophets. The romance of which the Persian monarch is the principal character, is the second written by Mad. Scuderi, and, like *Ibrahim*, passed on its first publication under the name of her brother.

Astyages, king of Media, perplexed by the disastrous horoscope of his grandchild Cyrus, ordered him to be exposed on a desert mountain. Being preserved, however, and brought up by a shep-

herd, he soon distinguished himself among his companions, over whom he exerted a sort of regal authority. By the confession of the shepherd, it was discovered that his foundling is the grandson of Astyages; but the magi being clearly of opinion that the sway he assumed over his companions, was the royal usurpation portended by the planets, Cyrus was sent for to court, and in this portion of the romance, some babyish anecdotes are related in the manner of Xenophon.

The constellations again became malignant, and Cyrus was banished to Persia. From this country he set out on his travels, bearing the assumed name of Artamenes, and under this appellation visited different towns of Greece, particularly Corinth, where he was magnificently entertained by the sage Periander and his mother. On his return to Asia he passed into Cappadocia, over which his uncle Cyaxeres, son of Astyages, then reigned in right of his queen. As this monarch, like his father, was understood to have a superstitious terror for Cyrus, the young prince was obliged to appear incognito. It was in a temple of Sinope, the capital of Cappadocia, that he first beheld Mandane, the daughter of Cyaxares, and heroine of the romance, who came with her father and his magi to return thanks for the demise of Cyrus, who had

been believed dead since his departure from Persia. Although engaged in this ungracious office, Cyrus became deeply enamoured of the princess, or, as the romance expresses it, was amorously blasted by her divine apparition.

Cyrus was thus induced to offer his services to Cyaxares, in the contest in which he was then engaged with the king of Pontus, who had declared war, because he was refused the Princess Mandane in marriage. A soldier of fortune, called Philidaspes, but who afterwards proves to be the king of Assyria, also served in the Cappadocian army. He, too, was in love with Mandane, and between this adventurer and Artamenes there was a perpetual rivalry of love and glory.

Meanwhile intelligence arrived from old Astyages, that, in order to preclude all chance of the Persian family ever mounting the throne of Media, he had resolved again to marry, and that on reflection, the only suitable alliance appeared to him to be Thomyris, queen of Scythia. Artamenes is despatched by Cyaxares on an embassy, to propitiate this northern potentate. On his arrival, the queen unfortunately falls in love with him, which defeats the object of his mission, and he with difficulty escapes from her hands. He finds, on returning to Cappadocia, that his rival, the

king of Assyria, had succeeded in carrying off Mandane, and had conveyed her to Babylon. Artamenes is placed at the head of the Cappadocian army, and marches against the capital of Assyria. The town is speedily invested, but when it is on the point of being captured, the king privately escapes, and, taking Mandane along with him, shuts himself up in Sinope. Thither Artamenes marches with his army, but on arriving before its walls, he finds the city a prey to the flames. Artamenes on seeing this, begins to expostulate with his gods, taxing them in pretty round terms with cruelty and injustice. The circumstances were, no doubt, perplexing, but scarcely such as to justify the absurdity and incoherence manifested in his long declamation. At length, however, he derives much consolation by reflecting, that if he rush amid the flames, his ashes will be mingled with those of his adored princess ; a commixtion which, considering the extent of the conflagration, was more to be desired than expected. One of his prime counsellors perceiving that he stood in need of advice, now gives it as his opinion, that it would be expedient to proceed in the very same way they would do if the town were not on fire. A greater part of the army is accordingly consumed or crushed by the falling houses, but Cyrus

himself reaches the tower where he supposed Mandane to be confined. Here he discovers the king of Assyria, but Mandane had been carried off in the confusion by one of the confidants of that prince. The rivals agree for the present to postpone their difference, and unite to recover Mandane. The subsequent part of the romance is occupied with their pursuit, and their mutual attempts to rescue the princess from her old lover, the king of Pontus, under whose power she had fallen. We have also the history of the jealousy of Mandane, and the letters that pass from the unfortunate Mandane to the unfaithful Cyrus, and from the unhappy Cyrus to the unjust Mandane.

At length Cyrus succeeds in rescuing his mistress from the king of Pontus, and, as the Assyrian monarch was slain in the course of the war, he has no longer a rival to dread: his grandfather and uncle having also laid aside their superstitious terrors, he finally espouses the Princess Mandane at Ecbatana, the capital of Media.

The episodes in this romance are very numerous, and consist of the stories of those princes who are engaged as auxiliaries on the side of Cyrus or the king of Pontus. This is the romance which has been chiefly ridiculed in Boileau's *Les Heros de Roman*. Diogenes addressing Pluto, says,

“Diriez vous pourquoi Cyrus a tant conquis de provinces et ravagé plus de la moitié du monde ? C’est que c’étoit un prince ambitieux. Point de tout ; c’est qu’il vouloit delivrer sa princesse qui avoit été enlevée—Et savez vous combien elle a été enlevée de fois ? Non. Huit fois—voilà une beauté qui a passé par bien des mains.”

### CLELIE HISTOIRE ROMAINE

is a romance also written by Mad. Scuderi, though it was originally published under the name of her brother. It consists of ten volumes 8vo, of about eight hundred pages each, and was printed at Paris in 1656.

This work enjoyed for some time considerable reputation, but has finally acquired, and perhaps has deserved, the character of being the most tiresome of all the tedious productions of its author. It comprehends fewer incidents than the others, and more detail relating to the heart, and is filled with those far-fetched sentiments so much in fashion in the early age of Lewis XIV.

But what has chiefly excited ridicule in this romance, is the *Carte du pays de Tendre* prefixed : in the map of this imaginary land, there is laid

down the river D'Inclination, on the right bank of which are situated the villages of *Jolis vers*, and *Epitres Galantes* ; and on the left those of *Complaisance*, *Petits soins* and *Assiduités*. Farther in the country are the cottages of *Legerté* and *Oubli*, with the lake *Indifference*. By one route we are led to the district of *Desertion* and *Perfidie*, but by sailing down the stream, we arrive at the towns *Tendre sur Estime*, *Tendre sur Inclination*, &c.

The action of this romance is placed in the early ages of Roman history, and the heroine is that Clelia who escaped from the power of *Por-senna*, by swimming across the *Tiber*. *Aronce*, the son of that monarch, is the favoured lover of Clelia, and his rivals are a young Roman, called *Horace*, King *Tarquin*, and his son *Sextus*. A great part of the romance is occupied with an account of the expulsion of the royal house, and the siege of Rome undertaken by the exiled family and their allies. During the continuance of the siege, Clelia resided in a secure place in the vicinity of the town, along with other Roman ladies, whose society was greatly enlivened by the arrival of *Anacreon*, who was escorting two ladies on their way to consult the oracle of *Praeneste*: though upwards of sixty years of age, the Greek poet was still gay and agreeable, and entertained the



party as much by his *conversation* as his *Jolis vers*. The romance terminates with the conclusion of a separate peace between the Romans and Porsenna, and the union of Clelia with his son Aronce.

It is but a small part of the romance, however, which is occupied with what is meant as the principal subject ; the great proportion of these cumbersome volumes is filled with episodes, which are for the most part love-stories, tedious, uninteresting, and involved. It is well known, that in the characters introduced in these, Madame Scuderi has attempted to delineate many of her contemporaries. Accordingly Brutus has been represented as a spark, and Lucretia as a coquette. One of the earliest episodes is that of Brutus and Lucretia, who carry on a sentimental intrigue, in the course of which Brutus addresses many love verses to his mistress, among which are the following :

“ Quand verrai Je ce que J'adore  
Éclairer ces aimables lieux ;  
O doux momens—momens précieux,  
Ne reviendrez vous point encore—  
Hélas ! de l' une a l' autre Aurore,  
A peine ai Je fermé les yeux,” &c.

But, if in this masquerade we cannot discover the age of Tarquin, we receive some knowledge

concerning the manners and characters of that of Mad. Scuderi. In the fraternity of wise Syracusans she has painted the gentlemen of Port Royal, and particularly under the name of Timanto, has exhibited M. Arnauld d'Andilly, one of the chief ornaments of that learned society. Alcandre is Louis XIV., then only about eighteen years of age, of whom she has drawn a flattering portrait. Scaurus and Liriane, who come to consult the oracle of Præneste, are intended for the celebrated Monsieur, and still more celebrated Madame Scarron. In Damo, the daughter of Pythagoras, who undertook the education of Brutus, she has painted Ninon L'Enclos, who instructed in gallantry the young noblemen who frequented her brilliant society. Finally, she has described herself in the portrait of Arricidie, who delighted more by the beauties of her mind than by the charms of her person. This incongruous plan of taking personages from ancient history, and attributing to them manners and sentiments of modern refinement, especially with regard to the passion of love, is repeatedly censured and ridiculed by Boileau in his *Art Poétique* :—

*Gardez donc de donner, ainsi que dans Clélie,  
L'air et l'esprit François à l'antique Italie ;*

Et sous des noms Romains faisant notre portrait,  
Peindre Caton galant et Brutus dameret.

The romance of

### ALMAHIDE,

also by Mad. Scuderi, is founded on the dissensions of the Zegris and Abencerrages, and opens with an account of a civil broil between these factions in the streets of Granada. The contest was beheld from the summit of a tower, by Roderic de Narva, a Spanish general, who had been taken prisoner by the Moors, and Fernand de Solis, (a slave of Queen Almahide,) who, at the request of the Christian chief, related to him the history of the court of Granada.

On the birth of Almahide, the reigning queen, an Arabian astrologer predicted that she would be happy and unfortunate, at once a maid and a married woman; the wife of a king and a slave, and a variety of similar conundrums. In order that she might avoid this inconsistent destiny; her father Morayzel sent her to Algiers, under care of the astrologer, who must have been the person of all others most interested in its fulfilment. After a

number of adventures she was wrecked on the coast of Andalusia, and was received in the palace of the duke of Medina Sidonia, where a reciprocal attachment arose between her and Ponce de Leon, son of that nobleman, and she soon after won the affections of the marquis of Montemayor, heir of the duke d'Infantada.

At length the parents of Almahide, learning that she was in the palace of Medina Sidonia, sent to reclaim her, and she was accordingly delivered up to them. Ponce de Leon followed her to Granada, in the garb of a slave: in that disguise he got himself sold to Morayzel, the father of Almahide, who presented him to that lady. A similar stratagem was adopted by her other Spanish lover, who allowed himself to be taken prisoner in a skirmish with the Moors, commanded by Morayzel, who ordered him to be conducted to Granada, and presented likewise as an attendant to his daughter.

The dissensions which arose between the two lovers thus placed around the person of their mistress, are restrained by the prudence and temper of Almahide, but each watches in secret an opportunity of supplanting his rival.

Meanwhile Boaudilin, king of Granada, beheld

his empire a prey to the factions of the Zegris and Abencerrages. As the monarch was of the former tribe, it was judged advisable, in order to heal the dissensions, that he should chuse a queen from among the latter. Unfortunately he was so deeply enamoured of Miriam, a woman of low birth, whom it would have been unsuitable to have raised to the regal dignity, that he refused to offend her by espousing another. In these circumstances, Almahide was requested to impose on the public, by performing for a season the exterior offices of queen. She readily consented to execute a part in this plan; but she had scarcely entered on the public performance of royalty, when the king fell in love with her pseudo majesty, and unexpectedly proposed that she should not confine herself to the discharge of the ostensible duties of her situation. This important change in the original stipulation was resisted by Almahide, on the ground that her heart was already engaged to another, and the romance terminates with an account of some ineffectual stratagems, on the part of the king, to discover for whose sake Almahide rejected a more ample participation in the cares of royalty.

It will be perceived that the romance is left incomplete, and the part of which an abstract has

been given, though published in eight volumes 8vo., can only be regarded as a sort of introductory chapter to the adventures that were intended to follow.

Mathilde d'Aguilar, the last romance of Mad. Scuderi, is also a Spanish story, and is partly founded on the contests between the Christians and Moors.

Of the analogies that subsist between all the departments of Belles Lettres, none are more close than those of romance and the drama. Accordingly, as the Italian tales supplied the materials of our earliest tragedies and comedies, so the French heroic romances chiefly contributed to the formation of what may be considered as the second great school of the English drama, in which a stately ceremonial, and uniform grandeur of feeling and expression, were substituted for those grotesque characters and multifarious passions, which had formerly held possession of the stage. From the French romances were derived the incidents that constitute the plots of those tragedies which appeared in the days of Charles II. and William, and to them may be attributed the prevalence of that false taste, that pomp and unnatural elevation, which characterize the dramatic productions of Dryden and Lee.

It appears very unaccountable that such romances as those of Calprenede and Scuderi, should in foreign countries have been the object of any species' of literary imitation ; but in their native soil the popularity of heroic romances, particularly those of Madame Scuderi, may, I think, be in some measure attributed to the number of living characters that were delineated. All were anxious to know what was said of their acquaintance, and to trace out a real or imaginary resemblance. The court ladies were delighted to behold flattering portraits of their beauty in Ibrahim or Clelia, and perhaps fondly hoped that their charms were consecrated to posterity. Hence the fame of the romance was transitory as the beauty, or, at least, as the existence, of the individuals whose persons or characters it portrayed. Mankind are little interested in the eyes or eye-brows of antiquated coquettes, and the works in which these were celebrated, soon appeared in that intrinsic dulness which had received animation from a temporary and adventitious interest. This charm being lost, nothing remained but a love so spiritualized, that it bore no resemblance to a real passion, and manners which referred to an ideal world of the creation of the author. The sentiments, too, of chivalry which had revived under a more elegant

and gallant form during the youth of Louis XIV. had worn out, and their decline was fatal to the works which they had called forth and fostered. The fair sex were now no longer the objects of deification, and those days had disappeared, in which the duke of Rochefoucault could thus proclaim the influence of the charms of his mistress :

Pour meriter son cœur pour plaire a ses beaux yeux,  
J' ai fait guerre a mon roi, Je l' aurois fait aux Dieux.

Besides, the size and prolixity of these compositions had a tendency to make them be neglected, when literary works began to abound of a shorter and more lively nature, and when the ladies had no longer leisure to devote the attention of a year and a half to the history of a fair Ethiopian.

In addition to all this, the heroic romance, when verging to its decline, was attacked by genius almost equal to that by which the tales of chivalry had formerly been laughed out of countenance. Moliere's *Precieuses Ridicules* appeared in 1659, when the heroic romance was too much in vogue to be easily brought into discredit ; but the satire of Boileau, entitled *Les Heros de Roman, Dialogue*, though written about the same period, was



not published till after the death of Madame Scuderi, in 1701, by which time the reputation of her romances was on the wane, and was probably still farther shaken by the ridicule of Boileau. That poet informs us, that in his youth, when these works were in fashion, he had perused them with much admiration, and regarded them as the master-pieces of the language. As his taste, however, improved, he became alive to their absurdities, and composed the dialogue above-mentioned, which he declares to be "*Le moins frivole ouvrage qui soit encore sorti de ma plume.*" In this work the scene is laid in the dominions of Pluto, who complains to Minos, that the shades which descend from earth no longer possess common sense, that they all talk *galanterie*, and upbraid Proserpine with having *l'air Bourgeois*. During this conversation, Rhadamanthus announces that all hell is in commotion; that he had met Prometheus at large, with his vulture on his hand, that Tantalus was intoxicated, and that Ixion had just ravished one of the furies. Cyrus, Alexander, and other heroes, are summoned from the Elysian fields to quell the insurrection. They appear accompanied by their mistresses, and the satire on the heroic romances is contained in the extra-

gance and affectation of their sentiments and language.<sup>1</sup>

It seems unnecessary to search farther into the reasons of the decay of heroic romance, of which the temporary favour may to a modern reader appear more unaccountable than the decline. Similar causes contributed to render pastoral romance unpopular ; and, except in the works of Florian, there have been no recent imitations, of any note, of that species of composition. Spiritual fictions, of which the object was to inculcate a taste for the ascetic virtues, came to be regarded as despicable, in consequence of the increasing lights of reason. Political romances had never formed an extensive class of fiction, nor, in modern times, have there been many imitations of such works as the *Utopia* or *Argenis*.

<sup>1</sup> The fiction of Boileau seems equally absurd as the works which he ridicules ; but the classics were now coming into vogue, and a satire, composed after the manner of Lucian, was, of course, regarded as elegant and witty.

## CHAPTER XIII.

*French Novels.—Fairy Tales.—Voyages Ima-*

THE human mind seems to require some species of fiction for its amusement and relaxation, and we have seen in the above survey, that one species of fable has scarcely disappeared, when it has been succeeded by another. The decline of tales of chivalry produced those various classes of romantic composition with which we have been recently engaged, and the concurrent causes which hastened their decay, were indirectly the origin of those new sorts of fiction, which became prevalent in France towards the close of the 17th, and during the first half of the 18th century.

These, I think, may be reduced into *four* classes. 1. That which is founded on a basis of his-

torical events, as the Exiles of the court of Augustus, and those numerous works concerning the intrigues of the French monarchs, from the first of the Merovingian race to the last of the Bourbons.

2. Novels, such as Marianne, Gil Blas, Heloise, &c. of which the incidents, whether serious or comical, are altogether imaginary. 3. A species of romance of a moral or satirical tendency, where foreigners are feigned to travel through the different states of Europe, and describe the manners of its inhabitants. This class comprehends such works as the Turkish Spy, and is partly fictitious and partly real. The journey and characters are the offspring of fancy, but a correct delineation of manners and customs is at least intended. 4. Fairy Tales, to which may be associated the French imitations of the Oriental Tales, and the *Voyages Imaginaires*.

1. The object of historical novels is to give to moral precept, the powerful stamp of experience and example. It was supposed that the adventures of well-known heroes, though in some measure fictitious or conjectural, would produce a more powerful impression than the story of an imaginary personage. In most compositions of this description, however, we are either tired

with a minute detail of events already well known, or shocked by the manifest violation of historical truth.

The intrigues, both amorous and political, of the court of France, have given rise to the greatest number of the compositions of this description, which appeared during the period on which we are now entering. As far back as the year 1517, a sort of historical romance was formed on the subject of Clotaire and his four queens; but this style of writing does not appear to have been accommodated to the taste of the age, and a long period elapsed before it was imitated. About the middle of the subsequent century, M. de la Tour Hotman published the *Histoire Celtique*, in which, it is said, the principal actions of the French monarchs are shaded, but so faintly and ambiguously, that those who are but moderately conversant in French history, cannot trace any correspondence in the incidents. At length, however, in 1695, appeared the *Intrigues Galantes de la cour de France*, written originally by M. Sauval, and afterwards improved and enlarged by Vanel, by whom it was published. This work contains a history of the amours of the French sovereigns, from the commencement of the monarchy to the

reign of Lewis XIV. To a passion, which has, no doubt, especially in France, had considerable effect in state affairs, there is assigned throughout this work a paramount influence. It is represented as alone prompting the Merovingian family to unbounded atrocities, as the motive which stimulated Charles VII. to achieve the freedom of his country, and in future reigns as regulating the decisions of the cabinet, and distribution of the favours of the crown.

Besides this general history, the reign of almost every individual monarch has formed the subject of an amorous romance. We have *Anecdotes de la cour de France sous le regne de Childeric*, published in 1736, a work falsely attributed to Count Hamilton. The intrigues of the sanguinary and abandoned *Frédégonde*, the mistress of *Chilperic*, have formed the subject of many romances. *Madame de Lussan* wrote the *Anecdotes de la cour de Philippe Auguste*; *Memoires Secretes des Intrigues de la cour de Charles VII.*; *Anecdotes de la cour de François le Premier*, &c. The events of this prince's reign, so well calculated to make a figure in romance, have been the subject of other compositions of a similar description. *Mad. Murat*, author of the *Fairy Tales*, has written a novel entitled *La Comtesse de Chateaubriant*, who

was the mistress of that monarch. *Les Amours de Grand Alcandre*, by the princess of Conti, details the unremitting gallantries of Henry IV., and has obtained considerable celebrity in France, either from the intrinsic merit of the composition, the interesting character of the hero, or the rank of its author. The works which regard the amours of Lewis XIII., are, as might be expected, chiefly satirical. Those which relate to Lewis XIV., are covered with a thick veil of fiction, which was rendered prudent by the recent nature of the intrigues, and the existence of the persons concerned, or, at least, of their immediate descendants.

Other writers of this period have resorted to more ancient times. *Les Femmes Galantes de l'Antiquité*, by M. Serviez, published in 1726, commences with the multifarious intrigues of the Pagan divinities. Whatever is marvellous in mythology has been retrenched, and its place filled up with amorous incident supplied from the fancy of the author. Io, Semele, &c. are the characters in the three first volumes; Sappho, and other females, who were content with mortal lovers, are exhibited in those that follow. As in the novels founded on French history, every incident in this work is attributed to love. Indeed, the author declares that it is his object to show, that

the wonderful expeditions and incredible revolutions recorded in ancient history, had, in fact, no other spring than the resentment of a despised rival, or the dictates of an imperious mistress.

M. Serviez is also the author of *Les Imperatrices Romaines*, in which he begins with the four wives of Julius Cæsar, and concludes with the nuptials of Constantine. Most of the anecdotes have some foundation in fact, but are amplified with circumstances feigned at the will of the author, who, if he wished to exhibit the enormities of vice in their greatest variety, and most unlimited extent, which may be presumed from his selection of such a subject, had little occasion to add the embellishments of fiction. This work was first published under the title of *Les Femmes des Douze Césars*, but being afterwards continued, it was printed in 1728, by the name which it now bears.

Of a similar description with this last-mentioned work, is the *Exiles of the Court of Augustus*, by Madame Jardins, afterwards Mad. Villedieu. In this romance, Ovid, of course, is a distinguished character. He is joined in his place of banishment by other illustrious Romans, who relate the history of their own misfortunes, and the incidents which had occurred in the capital during his exile.



All the works that have been mentioned are built on history, conjecture, and imagination. Most of them are full of gallantry, but the authors pretend that the cause of morality is aided by the reflections which result. There is little display of sentiment or character. Truth and fiction are unpleasantly blended. Nor are the deviations from the former compensated by the embellishments of the latter, and the reader finds it difficult to pardon the alterations in history, as he is not presented in exchange with incidents of which the decoration palliates the want of reality.

2. Though the celebrated novel,

### LA PRINCESSE DE CLEVES,

be in some measure historical, and of consequence partakes, especially in its commencement, of the nature of that class of works with which we have last been engaged, it may justly be esteemed the earliest of those agreeable and purely fictitious productions, whose province it is to bring about natural events by natural means, and which preserve curiosity alive without the help of wonder—in which human life is exhibited in its true state, diversified only by accidents that daily happen in

the world, and influenced only by passions which are actually to be found in our intercourse with mankind.

In this point of view, the Princess of Cleves forms, as it were, an æra in literature. The writers of the *Romans de longue Haleine*, and, indeed, most of the poetical love writers who were contemporary with them, seem rarely to have consulted, and consequently seldom affected, the heart. Their lovers appear more anxious to invent new conceits, than to gain their mistresses ; and the mistresses, indeed, are such, that quibbles, fustian, or metaphysical jargon, was all they had a right to expect. Madame La Fayette,\* the author of the *Princesse de Cleves*, at length brought the human passions into play. Her heroes and heroines, indeed, are still princes and princesses, and the catastrophe of the piece is perhaps too much in the manner of the old school, but she has produced a work at once dignified and tender, full of interesting portraits and of pleasing incidents.

The scene of events is laid at the court of Henry II. of France, and the time at which they are supposed to occur, is towards the conclusion of

\* See Appendix, No. 8.

the reign of that monarch. The author begins with an account of the different personages of the court, and she delineates their characters, and unfolds their political views, with all the truth of history. Among those who appear in this romance, is Mary Stewart, the unfortunate queen of Scotland, and we are so accustomed to contemplate her in affliction and misery, that we feel a certain sympathy and satisfaction while viewing her in the gaiety and frivolity of youth.

Among the princes and lords at the court of Henry, the most distinguished for gallantry and personal attractions, was the duke de Nemours. His reputation in these respects was indeed so high, that an ambassador, despatched by Henry to congratulate Queen Elizabeth on her accession to the throne, found her so full of his fame, that the duke is exhorted by Henry to try his fortune with that queen. He accordingly sends a confidant to examine if there were any grounds of hope, and meanwhile goes on a visit to the duke of Savoy.

During his absence, a young beauty arrived at court, who surpassed all other beauties. She had been educated in a distant province by her mother, Madame de Chartres, a widow lady of the

highest rank, of whom she was the only child, and had been inspired with the loftiest sentiments of purity, dignity, and decorum. On her arrival at court, her beauty, wealth, and rank, collect around her a crowd of the most distinguished aspirers. At length, by the advice of her mother, she fixes on the prince of Cleves, a young man possessed of many excellent qualities, who, without knowing of her rank and riches, had become enamoured of her charms at an accidental meeting. This prince, in gaining the hand of the fair bride whom he passionately adored, was not completely happy. He knew that she felt no other sentiments towards him than those of the highest respect and esteem, and, as there was thus something more than possession, which he did not possess, he enjoyed the privileges of a husband without ceasing to be a lover.

Meanwhile the plan of the duke of Nemours on the throne of England, seemed only to require his presence for its accomplishment; but, previous to his setting out for that kingdom, he returns to Paris to be present at the marriage of Claude of France. On his entrance into the ball-room, the king orders the princess of Cleves and the duke, who then met for the first time, to unite

in a dance, without any previous introduction or information.

The duke immediately becomes deeply enamoured of the princess, and gives up all thoughts of England, and his former mistresses: He conceals, however, his passion from his most intimate friends; he avows it not even to the princess herself, but at the same time affords innumerable proofs of the greatness of his love and admiration; without offending the most timid delicacy, he makes it evident that there never existed a passion more violent or more capable of making the greatest sacrifices. This is exhibited by details, which form one of the most interesting parts of the romance, and are such as perhaps only a female writer could delineate so well. The princess of Cleves is involuntarily affected, and the death of her mother, which happened about this time, renders her more helpless. She finds, at length, that she can no longer flatter herself that the duke is an object of indifference to her, and that all she can now do is to avoid him as much as possible, and to live in a state of retirement from the world.

The prince of Cleves was much at court, was anxious to have his wife there also, and extremely averse to her indulging a fondness for seclusion. But as she was every day exposed to see the duke

of Nemours at court, and even (as he was a friend of her husband) at her own house, she prevails on the prince to allow her to retire to the country. Accordingly she goes to Colomiers, a beautiful seat of the prince, at the distance of a day's journey from Paris. The duke of Nemours heard that she was there, and as his sister, the duchess of Mercœur, lived in the neighbourhood, he resolves to pay a visit to his sister, accompanied by the Vidame de Chartres, who was his own most intimate friend, and a near relation of the princess of Cleves.

One day, while hunting, the duke separates from his attendants, and wandering in the forest, arrives at a pavilion in the vicinity of Colomiers; and having entered it, he sees, while examining its beauties, the prince and princess of Cleves coming towards it. From a certain timidity and consciousness, the duke, unwilling to be seen, retires to one of the chambers of the pavilion, while the prince and princess sit down in the portico without, and he is thus placed in a situation in which he could not avoid overhearing their conversation. The prince urges his wife to return to court; tells her that she is more melancholy than usual, and that some great change must have happened, or some important reasons exist, to induce

her to shun the court. Urged at length in the strongest manner, and thinking that a direct acknowledgment would induce her husband to allow her to escape the perils which threatened her, she makes to him an avowal of her fears. She tells him that she wishes to avoid danger, in order that she might remain worthy of him. The prince is overwhelmed by this confession, for he had hitherto been chiefly consoled in thinking that if he was not passionately beloved, it was because her heart was unsusceptible of passion.—“ Et qui est il, madame, cet homme heureux qui vous donne cette crainte, depuis quand vous plaist il ; qu’ a t’ il fait pour vous plaire ; quel chemin a t’ il trouvé pour aller a votre coeur ? Je m’ estois consolé en quelque sorte de ne l’ avoir pas touché par la pensée qu’ il estoit incapable de l’ estre : cependant un autre fait ce que Je n’ ay pû faire, J’ ay tout ensemble la jalousie d’ un mari et celle d’ amant ; mais il est impossible d’ avoir celle d’ un mari apres un procedé comme le votre—mais vous me rendez maheureux par la plus grande marque de fidelité que jamais une femme ait donnée à son mari.”

The prince, however, urges her in vain to reveal the object of her fears. “ Il me semble, repondit elle, que vous devez estre content de ma since-

rité ; ne m' en demandez pas davantage, et ne me donnez point lieu de me repentir de ce que Je viens de faire : contentez vous de l' assurance que Je vous donne encore, qu' aucune de mes actions n' a fait paroistre mes sentimens, et que l' on ne m' a jamais rien dit dont J' aye pô m' offencer."

At length the princess is prevailed on to return to court, and her husband, who is still anxious to discover the object of her attachment and her dread, ascertains, by a stratagem, that it is the duke de Nemours. A variety of details is then given, all of which admirably contribute to the development of the story, but which it is impossible to abridge. After the tragical death of Henry, of which, and its political effects, there is an excellent account, the prince of Cleves and the duke de Nemours proceed to the consecration of the young king at Rheims. Meanwhile the princess of Cleves retires to her house at Colomiers. There she is visited by a lady, who, on her return, describes to the queen, in presence of the prince of Cleves and duke de Nemours, the solitary life led by the princess, and the delightful evenings which they had been accustomed to spend in a beautiful pavilion in the forest. The duke, recollecting the



place, resolves to go thither, in the hopes of having an opportunity of speaking with the princess ; and the prince, who, from some questions which the duke had put to the lady, anticipated his intentions, determines to watch his conduct.

On the following day the duke obtains leave of absence, on pretence of going to Paris, but departs for Colomiers ; and the prince, who had suspicions of this design, sends after him a gentleman, on whom he could rely. This emissary follows the duke to the forest, enters it, and, though now night, sees M. Nemours make his way over some high palisades into the garden of flowers, where the pavilion stood.—“ Les palissades estoient fort hautes, et il y' en avoit encore derriere, pour empescher qu' on ne pust entrer ; en sorte qu' il estoit assez difficile de se faire passage. Monsieur de Nemours en vint à bout neantmoins : si-tost qu' il fut dans ce jardin, il n' eut pas de peine a demeler ou estoit Madame de Cleves ; il vid beaucoup de lumieres dans le cabinet, toutes les fenestres en estoient ouvertes, et en se glissant le long des palissades, il s' en approcha avec un trouble et une emotion qu' il est aisé de se représenter. Il se rangea derriere une des fenestres, qui servoient de porte pour voir ce que faisoit

Madame de Cleves. Il vid qu'elle estoit seule ; mais il la vid d' une si admirable beauté, qu' à peine fut-il maistre du transport que luy donna cette veuë. Il faisoit chaud, et elle n' avoit rien sur sa tete et sur sa gorge, que ses cheveux confusement r' attachez. Elle estoit sur un lit de repos avec une table devant elle, ou il y avoit plusieurs corbeilles pleines de rubans ; elle en choisit quelques-uns, et Monsieur de Nemours remarqua que c' estoit des memes couleurs qu' il avoit portées au Tournoy. Il vid qu' elle en faisoit des noeuds a une canne des Indes fort extraordinaire, qu' il avoit donnée a sa soeur, a qui Madame de Cleves l' avoit prise, sans faire semblant de la reconnoistre pour avoir esté a Monsieur de Nemours. Après qu' elle eut achevé son ouvrage avec une grace et une douceur que répondoit sur son visage les sentimens qu' elle avoit dans le coeur, elle prit un flambeau et s' en alla proche d' une grande table, vis-a-vis du tableau du siege de Mets, où estoit le portrait de Monsieur de Nemours ; elle s' assit, et se mit à regarder ce portrait avec une attention et une reverie, que la passion seule peut donner.

“ On ne peut exprimer ce que sentit Monsieur de Nemours dans ce moment. Voir au milieu de la nuit, dans le plus beau lieu du monde, une per-

sonne qu' il adoroit, la voir sans qu' elle sçeut qu' il la voyoit, et la voir tout occupée de choses qui avoient du raport a luy et a la passion qu' elle luy cachoit ;—c'est ce qui n' a jamais esté goûté ny imaginé par nul autre amant."

While the duke advances to contemplate the princess more nearly, his scarf becomes entangled, and Madame de Cleves, turning at the noise that was occasioned, and half discovering the duke, immediately hastens to her female attendants, who were in an adjoining apartment. The duke hovers round the pavilion during the night, and returns in the morning to the village near the spot where the person employed to watch him was concealed. In the evening he again repairs to the pavilion, followed by the spy of the prince of Cleves. It is now shut, however, and Madame de Cleves is not there. During the remainder of the night the duke again wanders disconsolate, and only leaves the forest at the approach of day.

He who had followed the duke of Nemours returns to Rheims, and relates to his master the suspicious circumstances which had occurred. On hearing this intelligence, the prince of Cleves is immediately seized with a fever. The princess hastens to him, and an affecting conversation takes place. He informs her that her conduct has

broken his heart, and though she, in some degree, succeeds in dispelling his suspicions, he soon after expires.

The grief of the princess is inexpressible. Meanwhile the duke of Nemours in many ways testifies the most timid, and respectful, and violent love. An interview and admirable conversation take place, in which the princess, after confessing her attachment, persists in the resolution of remaining unmarried ; in the first place, because she must always consider the duke as in some degree the destroyer of her husband ; and, secondly, because his love was so essential to her happiness, that she feared lest by marriage she might put an end to it, and, finally, be tormented by his jealousy or coldness. She retires from court to her estates near the Pyrenees, where she falls into a long sickness. On her recovery she persists in the resolution of never again seeing the duke, or of hearing from him, and spends her time in exercises of devotion and charity.—“ Elle passoit une partie de l' année dans cette maison Religieuse, et l' autre chez elle ; mais dans une retraite et dans des occupations plus saintes que celles des Convents les plus austeres, et sa vic, qui fut assez courte, laissa des exemples de vertu inimitables.”

It will not perhaps, be possible to find in any other production a more exact delineation of love than in the romance of which this is the outline. The circumstance of a married woman being the object of it, would render the work exceptionable, were not this, in some degree, necessary to the nature and plan of the composition, and in order to show the triumph of reason and virtue over passion. The purity of heart and dignified conduct of the princess of Cleves are admirably delineated, and form a striking contrast to the gallantry and laxity in manners of those by whom she is surrounded. Had the author of this work lived at a different period, probably no exceptionable sentiment would have been admitted, but in the age of Lewis XIV., that monarch was considered as a model of perfection, and the faults and vices of his character were rendered fashionable. Some examples of this mode of thinking are exhibited in this work, and in particular a royal mistress seems to be regarded as a respectable and dignified character. For instance, the proud and virtuous Madame de Chartres speaks to her daughter in the following manner of the passion of Henry II. for the duchess of Valentinois :—" Il est vray que ce n' est ni le merite, ni la fidelité, de Madame de Valentinois,

qui a fait naître la passion du Roy, ni qui l' a conservée, et c' est aussi en quoy il n' est pas excusable ; car si cette femme avoit eü de a jeunesse et de la beauté jointe à sa naissance ; qu' elle eust eu le merite de n' avoir jamais rien aimé ; qu' elle eust aimé le Roy avec une fidélité exacte ; qu' elle l' eust aimé par raport à sa seule personne, sans interest de grandeur, ni de fortune, et sans se servir de son pouvoir que pour des choses honnestes ou agreables au Roy meme ; il faut avoüer qu' on auroit eü de la peine a s' empescher de louer ce Prince du grand attachement qu' il a pour elle."

Notwithstanding this laxity with regard to royal gallantry, and which must have had its effect in private life, there is in the whole composition, in the sentiments and language of this romance, a certain chivalrous grandeur, joined to a certain delicacy of feeling and sentiment, which is extremely interesting. The historical details are usually correct, and the episodes are introduced with great art, and never disturb the effect of the main story. In short, this admirable work has all the dignity of the old romance, without its prolixity or ridiculous inflation, and unites all the delicacy and minuteness of delineation of the modern novel to a certain feudal stateliness and majesty,

such as, in a higher path of literature, appears in the works of Bossuet and Corneille.

Madame La Fayette is also author of *Zayde*, a novel of considerable beauty and interest, and of a description resembling the Princess of Cleves, though, unfortunately, partaking somewhat more of the old school of fiction in its incidents and characters.

Gonsalvo, a Spanish grandee, disgusted with the treatment he had received at the court of Leon, the ingratitude of his prince, the treachery of a friend, and the infidelity of a mistress, retires into the wilds of Catalonia. He is accidentally received in the house of Alphonso, a grandee of Navarre, who was in retirement, on account of the misery he had occasioned himself, and those he most tenderly loved, by an extravagant and groundless jealousy. A community of wretchedness cements the friendship of Gonsalvo and Alphonso. They resolve to be unhappy together, and this residence gives the author an opportunity of contrasting the effects and force of the misery which results from the conduct of others, with that which is the consequence of our own.

One day, during his stay with Alphonso, Gonsalvo, while walking near the shore, perceives the wreck of a vessel, and at no great distance a wo-

man lying insensible on the sand. She is conducted to the habitation of Alphonso, and soon after recovers. Between Gonsalvo and this lady, who proves to be Zayde, a Moorish princess, and the heroine of the romance, a mutual passion arises. Residing on a desert shore, and ignorant of each other's language, their situation gives an opportunity for a singular painting of the emotions and intelligence of passion, which is infinitely more interesting than the subsequent adventures of the romance.

The story of Zayde is somewhat inferior to that of the princess of Cleves, but these two works united may justly be regarded as forming a new æra in fiction, and as effecting the most fortunate revolution we have witnessed in the course of our survey. The novels of Mad. La Fayette were, according to the expression of Voltaire, "*Les premiers ou l'on vit les mœurs des honnetes gens et des aventures naturelles decrites avec grace. Avant elle on ecrivoit d'un style empoulé des choses peu vraisemblables.*" Accordingly, we shall find that henceforth the old romance was completely exploded. Writers of fictitious narratives were now precluded from the machinery of the chivalrous, and the expedients of the heroic romance. They could no longer employ giants or



knights to carry a heroine away, or rescue her from captivity. They no longer attempted to please by unnatural or exaggerated representations, but emulated each other in the genuine exhibition of human character, and the manners of real life ; and the approximation of their works to this standard came now to be regarded as the criterion of their excellence.

Subsequent to this important revolution in taste, the most celebrated novels which appeared in France are the *Vie de Marianne*, and *Paysan Parvenu* of Marivaux.<sup>1</sup> Of these the first has been deservedly the most popular. It is the display of the noble pride of virtue in misfortune, and the succour it at length receives from enlightened beneficence.

A coach, in which Marianne, the heroine of the work, was travelling, when only two or three years of age, with persons afterwards supposed to be her parents, was attacked by robbers, and all the passengers murdered, with the exception of this infant. The child is placed under charge of the curate of a neighbouring village, by whom she is brought up with much care and affection till her sixteenth year. At this period the curate's sister is called

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, No. 9.

to Paris to attend a dying relative, and takes Marianne along with her, in order to place her in some creditable employment. During her stay in Paris, the curate's sister unfortunately falls sick, and dies after a short illness. By this time the curate had fallen into a state of imbecility, and his funds had been exhausted by the supplies necessary for his sister. It was, therefore, in vain for Marianne to think of returning to him, and she had no resource left but in the protection of a Religious, to whose care her friend had recommended her while on death-bed. The priest delivers her up to M. de Climal, in whose benevolence he placed implicit confidence, but who only extended his charity on such occasions for the most infamous purposes. Marianne is accordingly pensioned with Madame Dutour, a woman who kept a linen shop, and, during her residence there, the views of her hypocritical guardian are gradually developed. One day, while returning from mass, she accidentally sprains her foot, and being, in consequence, unable to proceed, she is conveyed to the house of M. Valville, who lived in the vicinity. Between this young gentleman and Marianne a mutual, and rather sudden, passion arises. M. de Climal, who was the uncle of Valville, accidentally comes into the apartment

where his nephew was on his knees before Marianne. After her return to her former lodgings, Climal perceives the necessity of pressing his suit more earnestly, and Marianne, of course, rejects it with redoubled indignation. Valville, who had now discovered the place of her residence, enters one day while his uncle was on his knees before Marianne. After this, M. de Climal, despairing to gain the affections of Marianne, withdraws his support. The orphan now addresses herself to the Religious, who had originally recommended her to Climal ; but, on visiting him, she finds that hypocrite along with the priest, endeavouring to persuade him that Marianne had ungratefully mistaken, and would probably misrepresent, his motives. Our heroine then applies to the prioress of a convent ; and a beneficent lady, called Mad. Miran, being fortunately present when she unfolded her story, she is, in consequence, pensioned at the convent at this lady's charge. Soon after, Mad. Miran mentions to Marianne that she had recently experienced much distress on account of her son M. Valville having lately refused an advantageous marriage for the sake of a girl who had one day been carried into his house, in consequence of an accident she had suffered on the street. Marianne does not conceal from her be-

nefactress that she is the person beloved by Valville, nor deny that a reciprocal attachment is felt by her, but she, at the same time, promises to use every effort to detach him from all thoughts of such an unequal alliance. The protestations, however, of Valville, that any other union would be the ruin of his happiness, induce his mother to agree to his nuptials with Marianne. It is therefore arranged, for the sake of public opinion, that the circumstances of her infancy should be concealed. These, however, being discovered by the unexpected entrance of Mad. Dutour, at the first introduction of Marianne to the relations of Valville, the marriage, in consequence, meets with much opposition from the family of her lover. All such obstacles are at length surmounted, and every thing seems tending to a happy conclusion ; but severer trials were yet reserved for Marianne than any she had hitherto experienced. Valville suddenly becomes enamoured of another woman, and the novel terminates in the middle of the story of a nun, who purposes to expatiate on her own misfortunes, in order, by the comparison, to console Marianne for the alienation of the affections of her lover.

This story is productive of many very interesting situations, but, at the same time, it is not free

from improbabilities. It is never very well explained why Marianne did not return to the curate, and the only reason which suggests itself to the reader, is, that for the sake of adventure it is necessary she should remain at Paris. Though possible, it is not very likely, that Climal should have entered the house of Valville while on his knees before Marianne; that Valville, in turn, should have detected his uncle in the same critical situation; that Marianne should have visited the monk at the moment when Climal was persuading him of her misconceptions; that Mad. Dutour should have come to dispose of some goods in the first and momentary visit of ceremony which Marianne paid to the relatives of Valville; and that Valville and his mother should have entered the chamber of the minister, when, at the request of these relatives, he was employing his authority with Marianne to make her renounce all thoughts of an union with Valville. Yet it is on these strange contingencies that all the incidents of the novel hinge. It was, I think, indelicate in Madame Miran, and improbable, when the other parts of her character are considered, to force the heroine to harangue her son on the impropriety of his passion. The attempt to conceal the circumstances of her in-  
was hopeless and degrading; nor were those

measures resorted to which could have given any chance of imposing on the public. The silence of Mad. Dutour, by whose inadvertence the discovery is principally made, ought at all events to have been in the first place secured.

But the principal defect of the story is, that it has been left unfinished, so that the mind remains disappointed and unsatisfied. Yet had the conclusion been as far inferior to the last half of the novel as that portion is to the first, the indolence of Marivaux has detracted little from his own fame, or the amusement of posterity.

It is chiefly in what I have formerly styled the Ornaments of Romance that Marivaux excels. In portrait painting, indeed, he is unrivalled : he has drawn with inimitable art of distinction the natural goodness of Madame Miran, and the enlightened virtue of her friend Madame Dorsin. The character of Marianne is a mixed one. Vanity seems her ruling passion, but it is of a species so natural and inoffensive that it only excites a smile, and never raises contempt nor disgust, nor a wish for her mortification. The author is never so happy as when he exposes the false pretences of assumed characters, the insolence of wealth, the arrogance of power or grandeur, the devices of mere formal or exterior religion, and the dissimu-

lation of friends. He has also well represented the harshness of benefactors, their still more revolting compassion, and the thin veil of delicacy which they sometimes assume. But of all subjects, he has most happily depicted the stupid curiosity and offensive kindness of the vulgar. He had an opportunity for this species of delineation in the character of Madame Dutour, who pierces the hearts of those she means to console and treat with cordiality. "Est il vrai," says her shop girl to Marianne, "que vous n'avez ni pere ni mere, et que vous n'etes l'enfant a personne? Taisez vous, idiote, lui dit Mad. Dutour qui vit que J'etois fachée; qui est ce qui a jamais dit aux gens qu'ils sont des enfans trouvés? J'aimerois autant qu'on me dit que Je suis batarde." It is well known that Marivaux preferred his character of Climal to the Tartuffe of Moliere; but the delineations scarcely admit of comparison. The hypocrites in the novel and the comedy, as has been remarked in D'Alembert's *éloge* of Marivaux, are not of the same description. Climal is a courtly hypocrite, and accustomed to polished society: Tartuffe is a coarser and more vulgar character. The dying scene, in which Climal repents and makes atonement to Marianne, is accounted the finest part of the work: he, indeed, utters the true

and touching language of contrition, but, it must be confessed, he has too great a command of words for a person expiring of apoplexy.

The sentiments and reflections in this novel are very numerous, and turn for the most part on the secret tricks of vanity, the deceptions of self-love in the most humiliating circumstances, and the sophisms of the passions. Marivaux untwists all the cords of the heart, but he is accused of dilating too much on a single thought, and of presenting it under every possible form. His delineations, too, have more delicacy than strength. "Le sentiment," says D'Alembert, "y est plutot peint en miniature qu' il ne l' est a grands traits ;" and according to the expression of another philosopher, "il connoissoit tous les sentiers du coeur, mais il en ignoroit les grandes routes."

A chief defect of Marivaux lies in his style ; of this fault the English reader cannot be so sensible as his countrymen, but all French critics concur in reprobating the singularity and affectation of his idiom.

Marivaux' *Paysan Parvenu* resembles his *Marianne* (to which, however, it is wonderfully inferior) in many of its features. It would be difficult, however, to give any analysis of a work in which there are few incidents, and of which the chief



merit consists in delineations of almost imperceptible shades of feeling and character.

The Abbé Prevot,<sup>1</sup> who holds the second rank among French novelists, is as much distinguished for imagination, as Marivaux for delicacy and knowledge of the heart. He was the first who carried the terrors of tragedy into romance; and he has been termed the Crebillon of this species of composition, as he is chiefly anxious to appal the minds of his readers by the most terrifying and dismal representations. Thus, in his earliest production, the *Memoires d' un Homme de Qualité*, printed in 1729, the Marquis de \* \* \* \* having lost a beloved wife, retires to an insulated mansion in Italy, of which the walls and pavement are covered with black cloth, except where the garments of the deceased are suspended. A gold casket, containing her heart, is placed beside him. Here he remains by torch-light for many months, which he spends in gazing on the portrait of the departed object of his affections. From this habitation he launches at once into the gaieties of a Carthusian monastery, whence he is extracted by the Duc de \* \* \*, who persuades him to accompany his son in his travels through the courts of Europe. The

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, No. 10.

story of Manon Lescaut, containing the adventures of a kept mistress and a swindler, the most singular and interesting of the novels of Prevot, has usually been appended to the *Memoirs of a Man of Quality*, though it was written long after, and has also been published separately. It is the history of a young man possessed of many brilliant and some estimable qualities, but who, intoxicated by a fatal and almost irresistible attachment, is hurried into the violation of every rule of conduct, and finally prefers the life of a wretched wanderer, with the worthless object of his affections, to all the advantages presented by fortune and nature.

This young man, while at college, elopes with Manon Lescaut, the heroine of the novel, and from this disgraceful connection he is never reclaimed. His mistress, unable to bear the ills of poverty, and seduced by an extravagant vanity, procures her own maintenance, and that of her lover, by the most disgraceful expedients. Yet while betraying, she preserves for him the most ardent affection. He, from corresponding motives of attachment, is induced to cheat at the gaming table, and to aid his mistress in extortion on her admirers; thus presenting in every situation the

contrast of unworthy conduct and exalted sentiment. The author palliates the actions of his hero by painting in the warmest colours the matchless beauty and graces, and delightful gaiety, of Manon; and, by means of the same attributes, throws around her an enchantment, which never utterly forsakes her in the deepest abyss of vice and misery. An ill-concerted fraud at length gives the friends of her infatuated lover an opportunity of separating him from his mistress. She is sent along with other convicts to New Orleans, but her adorer resolves to accompany her across the Atlantic. In the new world she becomes as admirable for the constancy as she had formerly been for the warmth of her attachment, and the errors of an ardent imagination are represented as extinguished by the virtues of an affectionate heart. She rejects an advantageous alliance, and the companion of her exile having incurred the displeasure of the governor, she follows him to the wilds of America, where she expires, exhausted by grief and fatigue. Her lover returns to France.

It has been objected to the moral tendency of this work, that, spite of her errors and failings, the character of Manon is too captivating; but, in fact, in the early part of her career, she possesses

a prodigious selfishness, and a selfishness of all others the most disgusting—the desire of luxury and pleasure, a rage for frequenting the theatre and opera; and it is for the gratification of such passions as these that she betrays and sacrifices her lover. It is only in the wilds of the western world that the aim of the author is developed, which seems to be to show, that there is no mind which a strong attachment may not elevate above itself, and render capable of every virtue. The defects of the novel are no doubt numerous, in point of morals, probability, and good taste, yet some portion of admiration must ever attend the matchless beauty of Manon, and some share of interest follow the exalted passion and self-devotedness of her lover.

A chief defect of the novels of Prevot consists in a perplexed arrangement of the incidents: he has an appearance of advancing at hazard, without having fixed whither he is tending; he heaps one event on another, and frequently loses sight of his most interesting characters. These faults are less apparent in *Manon L'Escaut* than most of his other works, but are very remarkable in his *Dean of Coleraine* (*Doyen de Killerin*) and the *Life of Cleveland*. The former is modestly announced by the author as "*Histoire ornée de tout ce qui peut ren-*

dre une lecture utile et agreable." It comprehends the story of a catholic family of Ireland, consisting of three brothers and a sister, who pass over to France after the Revolution, in order to push their fortunes in that country. The dean, who is the eldest, though against this experiment, agrees to accompany his relatives, that they may receive the benefit of his wisdom and counsel, which he, on all occasions, most liberally imparts to them. Accordingly, the novel consists of the numerous adventures, embarrassments, and afflictions which this family encounters in a foreign land, and which chiefly originate in the singular beauty of the sister, the ambition of the second, and the weakness of the youngest brother. The dean, who is a Christian of the most rigorous virtue, is entirely occupied with the present and future welfare of his family. His admonitions, however, are so frequent and tedious, that, as the Abbé Desfontaines has remarked, he is as insufferable to the reader as to his brothers and sister.

Cleveland comprehends the romantic adventures of a natural son of Oliver Cromwell. In his youth he is brought up in solitude by his mother, and is neglected, or rather persecuted, by his father, for whom he early conceives an insurmountable aversion. At length he escapes into France,

and his diffidence at his entrance into life, and the rise and progress of his first passion, are happily painted. He follows the object of his affections to the wilds of America, whither she had accompanied her father. There he is united to his mistress, and becomes the chief and benefactor of a tribe of savages, a novel situation, in which he has an opportunity of unfolding all the energies of his mind. An ill-founded jealousy, however, on the part of his wife, over which she brooded in silence for a long course of years, at length leads to new adventures, and to dreadful catastrophes. One of the most curious and interesting parts of the novel, is the episode concerning an almost inaccessible island in the neighbourhood of St Helena, in which there was established a sort of Utopian colony, consisting of protestant refugees from Rochelle, who, harassed by a dreadful siege, and panting for a secure asylum, carefully concealed themselves in this retreat from the rest of the world. This colony is visited by another natural son of Oliver Cromwell, who accidentally meets his brother Cleveland at sea, and relates to him what he had witnessed. On the whole, the adventures in this work are wild and incredible, but the characters are marked, impassioned, and singular.

The novels of Madame Riccoboni, which were chiefly written about the middle of the 18th century, are distinguished by their delicacy and spirit. Of these compositions the style is clear and beautiful, and the reflections, though not so deep-sought as those of Marivaux, are remarkable for their novelty and justness, and the felicity with which they are expressed. Indeed, at every page we meet with happy phrases and sentiments, which we wish to retain and remember. The story of Miss Jenny Salisbury is, I think, the most interesting and pathetic of her productions. It is the exhibition of female virtue in circumstances of the deepest danger and poverty, which seems to be a favourite subject with the French novelists.

Le Marquis de Cressy contains the picture of a man of rank and talents, but of unbounded ambition and worthless heart. He sacrifices the woman whom he loved, and by whom he was in turn adored, for the sake of a more advantageous alliance. She whom he chose as his wife is at last more unhappy than the mistress he had forsaken, and is driven, by the indifference and infidelity of her husband, to seek a voluntary oblivion of her misfortunes. The marquis was not so hardened as not to be rendered wretched by the misery he had dealt around him. "Il fut grand—il fut

distingué—il obtint tous les titres, tous les honneurs qu'il avoit désiré : il fut riche—il fut élevé, mais il ne fut point heureux."

In the Letters of Lady Catesby, are exhibited the mental struggles of a woman who had been forsaken by a man she adored, but who now sought pardon and reconciliation. Her lover had been solemnly engaged to her in marriage, but, from a scruple of conscience, had chosen another woman. His wife being now dead, he had come to London, and anew solicited the hand of Lady Catesby. She, to avoid his importunities, retired to the country, and in her first letters to her friend, which form by much the best part of the work, she delineates with admirable spirit the characters of the individuals she met at the castles and manor-houses she visited. The novel, or rather story, of Ernestine, also possesses exquisite grace and beauty. The other compositions of Mad. Riccoboni, *Christine de Suabe*, *Histoire d'Aloise de Livarot*, &c., are, I think, considerably inferior to the productions that have been mentioned.

Rousseau's *Héloïse* is generally regarded as the most eloquent and pathetic of French novels; but it seems more deserving of admiration for the passion and feeling displayed in particular passages, than for the excellence of the fable. Events



of the highest interest, which occur at the commencement of the work, serve to throw languor over the succeeding pages. The principal actions of the chief characters, on which the romance is founded, are altogether improbable, and not only inconsistent with the sentiments and passions elsewhere ascribed to these individuals, but repugnant to the ordinary feelings of human nature. Of this description are the marriage of Julia with Volmar, while she was yet enamoured of Saint-Preux—the residence of Saint-Preux with the mistress he adored, and the man she had espoused, and the confidence reposed in him by Volmar, while aware of the attachment that had subsisted between him and Julia. The author having placed his characters in this situation, extricates himself from all difficulties by the death of the heroine, who, according to the expression of a French writer, “*Meurt uniquement pour tirer M. Rousseau d’embarras.*”

The pathos and eloquence of Rousseau, the delicacy of Mad. Riccoboni, the gloomy, but forcible paintings of Prevot, and the knowledge of human nature displayed in the works of Marivaux, have raised the French to the highest reputation for the composition of novels of the serious class. In many of these, however, though admirable in point

of talent, there is too often a contest of duties, in which those are adhered to which should be subordinate, and those abandoned which ought to be paramount to all others. Thus, they sometimes entice us to find, in the subtilty of feeling, a pardon for our neglect of the more homely and downright duties, and lead us to nourish the blossoms of virtue more than the root or branches.

It was naturally to be expected, that while the more serious class of fictitious compositions was thus successfully cultivated, the more gay and lively productions of a similar description should not have been neglected. *La Gaîté Française* had become proverbial among all the nations of Europe, and, as the fictions of a people are invariably expressive in some degree of its character, corresponding compositions naturally arose. Of these, the most distinguished are the works of Le Sage, whose *Gil Blas* is too well known to require here any detail of those incidents, in which all conditions of life are represented with such fidelity and animation. The originality, however, of this entertaining novel has been much questioned, in consequence of its resemblance to the Spanish romance *Marcos de Obregon*, of which an account has already been given (see above, vol. III. p. 319, &c.). Many of the stories in *Gil Blas* are also de-

rived from the plots of Spanish comedies ; but they have in turn suggested the scenes of many of our English dramas : Cibber's comedy *She Would and She Would Not*, is taken from the story of *Aurora*, and Thomson's *Tancred and Sigismunda* is from the *Mariage de Vengeance*.

The leading idea of the *Diable Boiteux* is also borrowed from the Spanish, as the author indeed has acknowledged in his dedication. Part of the fiction, however, appears to have been originally drawn from the cabalistic work, entitled *Vinculum Spirituum*. The Asiatics believed that, by abstinence and particular prayers, evil spirits could be reduced to obedience and confined in phials. Accordingly, in the *Vinculum Spirituum*, which was derived from the east, it is said that Solomon discovered, by means of a certain learned book, the valuable secret of inclosing in a bottle of black glass, three millions of infernal spirits, with seventy-two of their kings, of whom Bebeth was the chief, Beliar the second, and *Asmodeus* the third. Solomon afterwards cast this bottle into a great well near Babylon. Fortunately for the contents, the Babylonians, hoping to find a treasure in this well, descended into it, and broke the bottle, on which the emancipated demons returned to their ordinary element. The notion of the

confinement of Asmodeus in the glass bottle, has been adopted in the Spanish work, entitled *El Diablo Cojuelo*, written by Luis Velez de Guevara, and first printed in 1641. In that production, the student Don Cleofas having accidentally entered the abode of an astrologer, delivers from a glass bottle, in which he had been confined by the conjurer, the devil, called the *Diablo Cojuelo*, who is a spirit nearly of the same description as the *Asmodee* of Le Sage, and who, in return for the service he had received from the scholar, exhibits to him the interior of the houses of Madrid. Many of Le Sage's portraits are also copied from the work of Guevara; as, for instance, that of Donna Fabula and her husband Don Torribio—of the alchemist employed in search of the philosopher's stone, and the hypocrite preparing to attend an assemblage of sorcerers, which was to be held between St Sebastian and Focarrabia. As in Le Sage, the *Diablo Cojuelo* unseals one of the secret houses (*casa de los locos*); and towards the conclusion of the work, he carries Cleofas beyond Madrid—he shows him the academies and convents in the vicinity, and transports him through the air to the provincial towns of Spain and the country-seats of its grandees. Some of the particulars in the *Diablo*

Boiteux have also been borrowed from the *Dia y noche de Madrid*, by F. Santos. The story of Count Belflor has, in turn, evidently suggested the plot of Beaumarchais' drama, entitled *Eugenio*.

The Bachelor of Salamanca, also written by Le Sage, possesses much of the same style of humour which characterizes *Gil Blas* and the *Diable Boiteux*, though it is greatly inferior to either of these compositions. In this work, Don Cherubim, the Bachelor of Salamanca, is placed in all different situations of life—a plan which gives scope to the author for satire, as various as the classes of men with whom his hero at different times associates. The first part, in which he appears as a tutor, is by much the most novel and entertaining. Le Sage has there admirably painted the capricious and headstrong humours of children—the absurd indulgence of parents—the hardships, slavery, and indelicacy of treatment, so often experienced by a class of men to whom the obligations due have been in all countries too slightly appreciated.—“*Si enim genitoribus corporum nostrorum omnia, quid non ingeniorum parentibus ac formatoribus debeamus? Quanto enim melius de nobis meriti sunt, qui animum nostrum excoluere, quam qui corpus.*”—(*Petrarc. lit.*)

Le Sage is also the reputed author of *Estevanille Gonzales ou le Garçon de Bonne humeur*. The plan of this romance, and some of the incidents (although fewer than might be supposed from the correspondence of the titles), have been suggested by the Spanish work, *Vida y hechos de Estevanillo Gonzalez hombre de buen humor compuesto por el mesmo*, which was first printed at Brussels in 1640.

During the minority of Lewis XV., and the regency of that duke of Orleans who published the splendid edition of the Pastoral of Longus, the court of France assumed an appearance of gay and open profligacy, resembling that which half a century before had prevailed in England, in the days of Charles, and forming a striking contrast to the austere and sombre manners which characterized the latter years of the reign of Lewis XIV. About that period, when libertinism had become fashionable from the sanction of the highest names in the state, Crebillon, the son of the celebrated tragic poet of that name, became the founder of a new species of comic novel. His works enjoyed at one time a high but not a long-continued, nor deserved reputation. They chiefly owed their popularity to satire and personal allusions, and the elegant garb in which pictures of debauchery were

attired. A great part of his *Ecumoir*, or *Tanzai et Neadarna*, feigned to be translated from the Japanese language, was written to ridicule the disturbances occasioned by the disputes of the Jansenists and Molinists, and it also contains the allegorical history of the Bull *Unigenitus*, the subject of so much discussion and controversy during the regency of the duke of Orleans. In its more obvious meaning, it is the story of an eastern prince and princess, to whose mutual love and happiness continual obstacles are presented by the malevolence of fairies. The romance is occupied with the means by which these impediments are attempted to be removed, and of which the chief is the implement that gives title to the romance. In the episode of a mole, who had once been a fairy called *Moustache*, and who relates her own story, the author has ridiculed the affected style and endless reflections of *Marivaux*.

In the *Sopha*, a spirit is confined by *Brama* to that article of furniture, which gives name to the work. He is allowed to change the *Sopha* of residence, but is doomed to remain in a habitation of this nature, till emancipated by a rare concurrence.

Ah *Quel Conte* ! is the story of an eastern mo-

narch, who was beloved by a fairy, the protectress of his dominions. In revenge for the neglect with which he treated her, she inspired him with a passion for a goose, whom he had met at a brilliant ball, attended by all the birds, of which there is a long description, and which, I suppose, is the origin of such productions as the *Elephant's Ball*, the *Peacock at Home*, &c. Most of the birds prove to have been princes, princesses, or fairies, and the greater part of the romance is occupied with the adventures which led to their metamorphosis, in which there is no doubt a concealed meaning and satire, but which, to most readers of this country, must appear a mass of unintelligible extravagance.

In *Les Egarements du Cœur et de l'Esprit*, the adventures of more than one individual of rank at the French court of that day are said to be depicted. This work comprehends the detail of a young man's first entrance into life, his inexperience and seduction, and the consequent remorse which holds out the prospect of his return to the paths of virtue. The plan of the author has been confined to the effects of love, or something resembling it, and the influence of the other passions has not been displayed.



Crebillon was imitated by M. Bastide, afterwards the conductor of the *Bibliothèque des Romans*; and also by Dorat, in his *Malheurs d'Inconstance* and in *Les Sacrifices de l'Amour*. The style of composition, however, introduced by Crebillon, was only popular for a moment, and fell into disrepute, when the manners of the French court became, if not more pure, at least less openly licentious.

An author who had already exhausted all the sources of tragic pathos and sympathy, also opened all the floods of satire and ridicule on the superstitions and despotism of his country. In most of the romances of Voltaire, there is a philosophical or moral object in view; but whether from this being the intention of the author, or from the reader being carried away by the poignant charms of his pleasantry and style, the full scope of the incidents is seldom perceived till the conclusion. The most frequent aim of this writer is to place in opposition, what ought to be, and what is; to contrast pedantry with ignorance—the power of the great with their unworthiness—the austerity of religious dogmas with the corruptness of those who inculcate them. Memnon is intended to show, that it is folly to aspire to the height of wis-

dom, and Zadig, that the events of life are placed beyond our controul. *L'Homme au quarante ecus* was meant to ridicule the system of the economists, and *Bacbouc* to correct the disposition of the French nation, to behold every thing in a ridiculous point of view, of which among all his countrymen Voltaire was himself the most guilty. But, though the object of this celebrated author, and the charms by which his incidents are adorned, be peculiar to himself, there is seldom much novelty in the incidents themselves. In *Micromegas* he has imitated an idea of *Gulliver's Travels*; in the *Ingenu*, the principal situation is derived from the *Baronne de Luz*, a romance by M. Duclos. The origin of almost every chapter in *Zadig* may be easily traced; thus the story of *Le Nez* has been suggested by the *Matron of Ephesus*: In *Ariosto* may be found *Les Combats*, or the story of the man in green armour, and in one of the *Contes Devots*, that of the hermit and angel introduced towards the conclusion; the pursuit of the bitch and horse is from the search of the *Cynogloire*, in the *Soirées Bretonnes* of Gueulette, who had it from an Italian work, *Peregrinaggio de Tre Figliuole del Re de Serendippo*. The tale, however, had been originally told in an Arabic work of the 13th century, entitled *Nighiaristan*,

which was written to show the acuteness of the Arabian nation. In the Nighiaristan, three brothers, of the family of Adnan, set out on their travels. They are met by a camel-driver, who asks if they had seen a camel he had lost. One brother says that the animal was blind of an eye; the second that he wanted a tooth; the last that he was lame, and was loaded with oil on one side, and honey on the other. Being thus suspected of having stolen the camel, the brothers are sent to prison, and afterwards explain to the judge by what observations they had discovered all these circumstances. Another of Voltaire's novels, *La Princesse de Babylon*, has been suggested by a French tale, entitled *Le Parisien et la Princesse de Babylone*, inserted in *La Nouvelle Fabrique des excellens Traits de Verités par Philippe Alcripe*. The name here assumed is fictitious, but the author is known to have been a monk of the abbey of Mortemer, who lived about the middle of the 16th century. In his tale *Le Parisien*, &c., the beautiful princess of Babylon has a disgusting and unwelcome suitor in the person of the Sophi of Persia. The son of a French jeweller hearing of her beauty, sends her an amatory epistle, by means of a swallow, and receives a favourable  
a similar conveyance; and this bird,

which corresponds to Voltaire's phoenix, becomes the friend and confidant of the lovers. Afterwards the Parisian repairs to Babylon, and the princess, by feigning sickness, effects an elopement.

In *Candide*, the most celebrated of Voltaire's romances, the incidents seem to possess more novelty. The object of that work, as every one knows, is to ridicule the notion that all things in this world are for the best, by a representation of the calamities of life artfully aggravated. It seems doubtful, however, how far the system of optimism, if rightly understood, is deserving of ridicule. That war, and vice, and disease, are productive of extensive and complicated misery among mankind, cannot indeed be denied, but another arrangement, it must be presumed, was impracticable; and he who doubts that the present system is the most suitable that can possibly be dispensed, seems also to doubt whether the Author of Nature be infinitely good.

3. The next class of fictions, according to the arrangement adopted, comprehends those works of local satire in which remarks on the history, manners, and customs of a nation, are presented through the supposed medium of a foreigner, whose views are unbiassed by the ideas and as-

sociations to which the mind of a native is habituated.

Of this species of composition, the object is to show that our manners and arts are not so near perfection as self-love and habit lead us to imagine; and its form was adopted, that opinions, religious and political, might be broached with more freedom, by being attributed to outlandish characters, for whose sentiments the author could not be held responsible.

The Turkish Spy (*L'Esploratore Turco*,) seems to have been the prototype of this species of composition. According to some authors, it was written by an Italian, named John Paul Marana, who, being involved in political difficulties in his own country, went to reside at Paris, and there wrote the Turkish Spy. It first appeared, it has been said, (*Melanges de Vigneul Marville*,) in the Italian language, and came out in separate volumes, towards the close of the 17th century. I certainly never saw the work in that language, and its Italian original is somewhat questionable. We are told, indeed, in *Nichols' Literary Anecdotes*, that Dr Manley was the original author, and that Dr Midgeley, who pretended to have translated it from the Italian, having found it among his papers, appropriated the composition to his own use.

Mahmut, the Turkish Spy, is feigned to have been employed by the Porte to observe the conduct of the Christian courts, and is supposed to have resided at Paris from 1637 to 1682. During this period he corresponds with the divan, and also with his own friends and confidants at Constantinople. The work comprehends an infinite variety of subjects, but the information communicated is chiefly historical ; the author principally discourses on the affairs of France, but the internal politics of Spain, and England, and the Italian states, are also discussed. In some letters he gives an account of battles, sieges, and other events of a campaign ; descants on the conduct and valour of great captains, and on the fortune of war ; in others he treats of court intrigues, and the subtilties of statesmen. When he addresses his friends and confidants, he amuses them with relations that are comical, affecting, or strange, the new discoveries in art and science, and those antiquarian researches, which, according to his expression, are calculated to draw the veil from the infancy of time, and uncover the cradle of the world. On religious topics he discourses with much freedom, and also on what he hears concerning the affairs of his own country,—the discontent and rebellion of the beys and bassas, the war with the Persians, and the amours of the seraglio.

The style of this miscellaneous composition is grave, sustained, and solemn, and pomp of expression is preserved, even in the gay and humorous passages. It has been objected to the author, that he treats of all things, but of nothing profoundly. A deep research, however, does not appear to have been his intention, nor is it very consistent with the plan of such a book as the Turkish Spy.

The work attributed to Marana was succeeded by the Persian Letters of Montesquieu, which is the most popular production of the class with which we are now engaged. Of this celebrated composition, the chief aim is to give ingenious pictures of the misdemeanours of mankind, and to attract the public attention to some important moral and political topics. The principal part of the work consists of the letters of two Persians, with whom, as the author feigns, he had become acquainted at Paris, and had received from them copies of their correspondence. Usbek, one of these foreigners, had fled from the envy and calumny of his countrymen, and, attended only by his friend Rica, had come to the west of Europe, allured by the pursuit of science. The style of the letters of these individuals, which are addressed to their eastern friends, is widely different. Those of Usbek,

even when he writes concerning his scraglio, are philosophical and grave, those of Rica are more light and entertaining. In the correspondence of both, European customs and opinions are contrasted with those of Asia, and the vices and follies of the western world are attacked in an oriental tone and manner. There are also a good many speculations on political economy, especially on the subject of population. In the letters of Usbek to his wives and dependants, there is painted a degree of jealousy of the former, and contempt of the latter, even when in his best humour, which I rather suppose must be strained and exaggerated. "Comment," (says he in a letter to one of his favourite women,) "*comment vous etes vous oublie jusqu'a ne pas sentir, qu'il ne vous est pas permis de recevoir dans votre chambre un Eunuque Blanc, tandis que vous en avez de Noirs destines a vous servir :*" he elsewhere expresses the utmost rage against his wives, because they complain, "*que la presence continuelle d'un Eunuque Noir les ennuye ;*" he is thrown into despair by the following pieces of intelligence, communicated by his grand eunuch, "*Zelis allant il y a quelques jours a la Mosque, laissa tomber son voile et parut presque a visage decouvert, devant tout le*



peuple.—J'ai trouve Zachi couchée avec *une* de ses esclaves, chose si defendue par les loix du Serail." In writing to his eunuchs, he habitually addresses them, " Rebut indigne de la nature humaine ;" and he reminds them, " Vous n'êtes dans le monde que pour vivre sous mes loix, ou pour mourir des que Je l'ordonne—que ne respirez qu' autant que mon bonheur, mon amour, ma jalousie meme ont besoin de votre bassesse : et enfin que ne pourrez avoir d'autre partage que la soumission, d'autre ame que mes volontés, d'autre esperance que ma felicité." This Persian, however, is as extravagant in his commendations as his abuse. Thus, in a letter addressed to Mollak, the keeper of the three tombs, he asks him, forgetting, I suppose, that he was the keeper of these tombs, " Pourquoy vis tu dans les tombeaux, Divin Mollak ?—tu es bien plus fait pour le sejour des etoiles : tu te caches sans doute de peur d'obscurcir le Soleil : tu n'as point de tâches comme cet Astre, mais comme lui tu te couvres de Nuages."

In the Jewish Spy, by D'Argens, which followed the Persian Letters, there is much sarcasm and invective ; the author thinks strongly, but his style is ungraceful.

The Peruvian Letters, by Madame Graffigny,

are somewhat different from the works of this class which I have hitherto mentioned. There is a private and domestic story, interwoven with reflections on manners, and, according to some critics, these letters should be accounted the earliest epistolary novel of France.

Zilia, a Peruvian virgin, when about to be espoused by the Inca, is carried off by the Spaniards. The vessel in which she was conveyed from America is captured on its passage by a French ship. From Paris she corresponds with her Peruvian lover, and expresses the effect that our most common arts and discoveries would have on one, who had not been accustomed to them from infancy. The commander of the French vessel had conceived for his captive the most violent, but most generous attachment; he does every thing in his power to facilitate for her an interview with the Inca, who, it was understood, had lately arrived in Spain. But the Peruvian monarch had already formed other ties; his religion and his heart were changed. He comes to Paris, but it seems to be only for the purpose of forsaking his mistress in form. Though abandoned to her fate, and disappointed in her dearest expectations, Zilia, pleading the sanctity of the engagements she had come under, from which the infidelity of the Inca could

not absolve her, refuses to transfer to her European lover the hand that had been pledged to the Peruvian prince.

The Chinese Spy was written about the middle of the 18th century. It contains the letters of three Mandarins, who were commissioned by their emperor to examine into the state of the religious opinions, policy, and manners of the Europeans. The first of their number remains at Paris, or London, but one of the subordinate mandarins is despatched to Spain, and the other to the Italian states, whence they correspond with the principal emissary. In his despatches to China, the chief Mandarin enters at considerable length into the politics of France and England, and gives some account of the grand epochs of European history from the downfall of the Roman empire. The Italian traveller has merely exhibited a sketch of his journey, but has happily enough described the characteristic features of the petty states he visited; the eagerness of gain at Genoa; the splendid but empty pomp of Milan; the mystery and intrigues of Venice, and the desolation of Ferrara; with regard to the court of Turin, he humorously proposes to purchase it as an ornament for the cabinet of the Chinese emperor. There is a good deal of liveliness and *naïveté* in some of the re-

marks, and the mode in which things are viewed by these Mandarins : “ Une chose surtout nous surprit etrangement ; c’etoit de voir marcher de jeunes femmes decouvertes dans les Rues, sans qu’ aucun homme les violat.” And again, “ Les Negocians d’Europe acquierent de grands biens, avec beaucoup d’aisance—voici comme ils amassent des tresors. On attire chez soi autant de richesses que l’on peut. Quand on en a fait une bonne provision, l’on ferme sa porte et l’on garde ce qu’on a : Cela s’ appelle ici, faire Banque-route.”

Those works that have been just mentioned, gave rise to the more modern productions, *L’Espion Anglois*, *L’Espion Americain en Europe*, and in this country to Goldsmith’s *Citizen of the World*.

In most of these compositions, particularly in the *Chinese Spy* and *Persian Letters*, every thing is seen with a disapproving and satirical eye. This, however, may in some degree be considered as characteristic, since all men are in general disposed to prefer the customs and manners in which they have been educated ; and accordingly every variation in the manners of another country, from those which existed in their own, is apt to strike

them as a defect, more especially if the latter have been endeared to them by absence. On the whole, the idea of this species of writing must be considered as happy, since, besides furnishing an opportunity for *naïve* remark, and affording greater liberty of examining without offence, or even of contradicting generally received opinions, it presents in a new light objects formerly familiar. Hence we feel a species of pleasure similar to that which is derived from pointing out a well-known striking scene to a stranger, enjoying his surprise, and even in some degree sympathetically partaking of his wonder.

4. The fourth class of French fictions of the 18th century, recalls us from those works in which the real events of human life are represented, to incidents more stupendous, and enchantments more wonderful, even than those portrayed in the brightest ages of chivalry.

Men of circumscribed conceptions believe in corporeal and limited deities, in preference to one spiritual and omnipotent. They naturally attribute every thing to direct agency—evil to malevolent, and good to beneficent powers. But, even when an infant people has believed in one supreme God, they have deemed all nature full of other invisible beings :—

— — — *Passim genios sparsere latentes,  
Qui regerent, motumque darent. vitamque soverent,  
Arboribus Dryadas, fluviorum Naiadas undis,  
Tum Satyros sylvis, et turpia numina Faunos.*

These nymphs and dryads of classical antiquity owed their existence to the same principles of belief which afterwards peopled the elements with fairies, and adventures have been related concerning them which have a considerable analogy to that class of stories on which we are now entering. A scholiast on Apollonius Rhodius relates, that one called Rhoecus, observing a beautiful oak ready to fall, ordered it to be supported. The nymph of the tree, whose existence depended on its preservation, unexpectedly appeared to him, and bade him demand from her whatever he pleased in return. This dryad being handsome, Rhoecus asked to be entertained as her lover, which she readily promised to her preserver, and soon after sent a bee to summon him: But the young man being engaged at the time, and provoked at its unintelligible buzz, drove the insect from him. The nymph, offended at this uncivil treatment of her ambassador, deprived Rhoecus of his sight. The ancients, too, had goddesses, who, like fairies, presided over infants at birth; and like fairies, the female deities of mythology,

avenged themselves on those who treated them with disrespect, when they appeared in a degraded condition. Latona changed the rustics of Lycia into frogs, because they drove her from a fountain at which she attempted to slake her thirst, when flying from the rage of Juno; and Ceres metamorphosed into a newt a saucy boy who mocked her, for the greed with which she supped some barley broth, when she came weary and in disguise to a cottage. On the other hand, we are told by Palaephatus, that Venus having appeared in shape of a deformed old woman to a poor ferryman, who was himself in the decrepitude of age, and being ferried over by him without reward, she converted him for this service into the beautiful youth so much beloved by Sappho.

Fairies of modern times are of different classes, and have been well divided into the Gothic and Oriental. The former were an appendage of the Scandinavian mythology, and had their origin in the wish to fill up the void and uniformity of external nature. Their attributes, like those of their eastern sisters, were supernatural power and wisdom, but they were malevolent and revengeful in disposition, and disagreeable in person. They inhabited the heath-clad mountains, the chill lakes,

or piny solitudes of the north, and their lineal descendants were long in this country the objects of popular superstition.

The aërial beings, or Peris of the east, owed their imaginary existence to that warmth of fancy which induces us to communicate life to every object in nature. Beneficence and beauty were their characteristics. They lived in the sun or the rainbow, and subsisted on the odour of flowers. Their existence was not interminable, but was of unlimited duration.

A knowledge of these creatures of imagination, was introduced into Europe by the crusaders, and the Moors of Spain. Their attributes and qualities were blended with those of the northern elf, though, as in every other species of romantic fiction, the eastern ideas were predominant.

Hence, a being was compounded for behoof of the poets and romancers of the age, which, according to local circumstances, to the information or fancy of the author, partook more or less of the Oriental or Gothic ingredients.

The notion of fairies was preserved during the middle ages. They act a conspicuous part in the *Fabliaux* of the *Trouveurs*, as the *Lai de Launval* and *Gruclan*. In the enumeration of the subjects



of Breton Lais, contained in an old translation of Lai Le Fraigne, we are told, that

“ Many there beth of Faery.”

Lancelot du Lac, one of the most popular tales of chivalry, and in which the Lady of the Lake is the most interesting character, gave an *eclat* to the race of fairies in France. In the subsequent romance of *Isaïe le Triste*, we have already seen that they came to act a part still more important and decisive. The story, too, of *Melusina*, which was written about the close of the 14th century, is a complete fairy tale. It was composed by Jean d'Arras, at the desire of the duke de Berri, son of John, king of France, and is founded on an incident recorded in the archives of the family of Lusignan, which were in possession of the duke. In this story, a queen of Albania, who was endued with supernatural power, having taken umbrage at the conduct of her husband, retired with her daughter *Melusina*, then an infant, to the court of her sister, the queen of the Isle Perdue. *Melusina*, as she grew up, was instructed in the rudiments of sorcery; and the first essay she made of her new-acquired art, was

to shut up her father in the interior of a mountain. The mother, who still retained some affection for her husband, sentenced Melusina, as a punishment, to be changed every sabbath into a serpent. This periodical metamorphosis was to continue till she met with a lover who would espouse her on condition of never intruding on her privacy during the weekly transformation ; and she was prescribed on these days a course of salutary bathing, which, if duly persisted in, might ultimately relieve her from this disgrace. Melusina accordingly set out in search of a husband, who would accede to these terms, and was in the first place received by the fairies of Poitou with due consideration. They introduced her to a nephew of the count of Poitiers, who espoused her on the prescribed conditions. He soon became a wealthy and powerful lord, by the machinations of his wife, who was particularly skilful in the construction of impregnable castles ; and one, of which she was the architect, afterwards appertained to her descendants the family of Lusignan. At length a brother of the count, persuaded him that Sunday was reserved by his wife as a day of rendezvous with a lover. The prying husband having concealed himself in her apartment, beheld his wife making use of the enchanted bath. As soon

as Melusina perceived the indiscreet intruder, she departed with a loud yell of lamentation. She has never since that period been visible to mortal eyes : Brantome, however, informs us that she haunts the castle of Lusignan, where she announces by loud shrieks any disaster that is to befall the French monarchy. The building she was supposed to have constructed was destroyed by the Duc de Montpensier, on account of its long and gallant resistance to his arms during the civil wars of France ; but the family of Lusignan, till it sunk in that of Montmorenci Luxembourg, continued to bear for its crest, a woman bathing, in allusion to the story of Melusina.

Hitherto European fairies had not been sufficiently imposing in their attributes, nor gorgeous in their decorations, to attain universal popularity ; but the Italian poets of the 15th and 16th centuries arrayed these creatures of imagination in all the embellishments which could be bestowed by poetical genius. They became more splendid and more interesting, and were prepared for that state in which they formed during some years a principal amusement of the most polished nation of Europe.

In the *Nights of Straparola*, which were translated from Italian into French with considerable

embellishments, in 1585, we find examples not only of this mode of composition, but outlines of the best known and most popular of the Fairy Tales, as *Le Chat Botté*, *Prince Marcassin*, *Blanche-belle*, *Fortunio*, &c. (See above, vol. II. p. 450.)

The immediate forerunner and prototype, however, of the French Fairy Tales, was the *Pentamerone* of Signor Basile, written in the Neapolitan jargon, and published in 1672. This work is divided into five days, each of which contains ten stories. The third of the first day, which is slightly altered from the first of the third of *Straparola*, may serve as an example of the close analogy that subsists between this work and the productions of Perrault and his imitators. A poor countryman, who dwelt in the neighbourhood of Salerno, was as remarkable for the deformity of his figure as the dulness of his understanding. One day, while employed in making up fagots in a wood, he perceives three damsels asleep, and erects over them a sort of shed, to screen them from the rays of the sun. When they awake, they inform him he had unwittingly obliged three powerful fairies, and promise in return that he shall at all times obtain of them whatever he may desire. The first use he makes of this unlimited credit is to wish that one of the fagots may

be transformed into a horse. While riding home, he is ridiculed on account of his grotesque appearance, by the young princess of Salerno, and he in revenge wishes that she may become pregnant. In due time she gives birth to twins, and the prince her father, being greatly incensed, orders an assemblage of the male inhabitants of his dominions, in expectation that the children from instinct will give some indication of their origin. To the astonishment of the court, the uncouth peasant alone receives their unwelcome caresses. He is in consequence sentenced to be drifted to sea in a hogshead, along with the princess and her family. During their voyage, she learns for the first time the story of the adventure with the fairies, and the origin of her pregnancy. On hearing this, she immediately suggests that it would be highly expedient to transform their present awkward conveyance into a more commodious vessel. The wish being formed, the hogshead is of course converted into an elegant and self-directed pinnace, which conveys them to a delightful spot on the shore of Calabria. There, on the formation of a second wish, the boat is instantly changed into a magnificent palace. At the suggestion of the princess, her companion receives, by the same easy expedient, all possible graces of person and endow-

ments of mind. Here the now happy pair spend many years of uninterrupted felicity; at length the prince of Salerno, being one day carried to a great distance while engaged in the pleasures of the chase, arrives accidentally at this delightful residence, and is there reconciled to his daughter.

The fourth of the third day of the *Pentamerone*, is the origin of *L'Adroite Princesse*, the first fairy tale that appeared in France. This composition has been generally attributed to Charles Perrault, and is placed in some editions of his works. It is dedicated to Madame Murat, afterwards so celebrated for her excellence in similar productions, and is intended to inculcate the moral, that Idleness is the mother of vice, and Distrust of security. These maxims are exemplified in the following manner:

A king, when setting out on a crusade, committed to a well-meaning fairy the charge of his three daughters, *Nonchalante*, *Babillarde*, and *Finette*, names which are expressive of the characters of the princesses. These ladies were shut up in an inaccessible tower, and, at the king's request, the fairy formed three enchanted distaffs; one was bestowed on each princess, and each distaff was fated to fall to pieces, when she to whom it was assigned did any thing contrary to her reputation, of

which it appeared to the king that his daughters could have very little opportunity.

At the top of the tower there was a pulley, by means of which the princesses let down a basket, to receive provisions and whatever else they required.

After a short stay in this solitude, the two elder sisters began to grow weary. One day they pulled up in the hamper an old beggar-woman, whom they observed at the foot of the tower imploring their assistance. Nonchalante hoped she would act as a servant, and Babilarde was anxious to have some new person to talk with. This mendicant proved to be a neighbouring prince, who was a great enemy of the king, and had assumed this disguise to avenge himself for certain injuries he had sustained. In prosecution of this plan, he made such assiduous court to the two elder sisters, that he soon effected the total destruction of their distaffs. Finette, whom he next importuned, eluded all his artifices: But while on death-bed, to which he was brought by the snares she laid for him, the prince made his younger brother swear to ask Finette in marriage, and murder her on the night of the nuptials.

Meanwhile the father arrived from his crusade, and immediately asked to see the distaffs of his

daughters: Each in turn presented the still unbroken distaff of Finette, who had agreed to accommodate them with the loan of it for the occasion. But the king was not to be so easily satisfied, and, to the utter discomfiture of the guilty, demanded to examine them all at one view. The transgression of the elder princesses was thus detected, and they were sent to the palace of the fairy who framed the distaffs, where they were condemned, for a long course of years, the one to hard labour, and the other to silence. The rest of the tale is occupied with the devices by which Finette evaded the fate prepared for her by the younger brother of the betrayer of her sisters.

This tale, as already mentioned, is taken from the *Pentamerone*, and, I think, with little variation of machinery or incident, except that in the Italian work, instead of the distaffs, the princesses are presented with three rings, the brightness of which is the test of the possessor's chastity.

*L'Adroite Princesse* was succeeded by a volume of fairy tales, unquestionably written by Perrault. It appeared in 1697, and is dedicated to one of the royal family of France, as written by Perrault D'Armancour, one of the author's children. All that is contained in each of these stories will be remembered by every one on the mere mention of



their titles. *La Barbe Bleue* has a striking resemblance to the story in the *Arabian Nights* of the third *Çalendar*, who has all the keys of a magnificent castle intrusted to him, with injunctions not to open a certain apartment ; he gratifies his curiosity, and is punished for his disobedience. It has been said, however, that the original Blue Beard was Gilles, Marquis de Laval, a general in the reigns of Charles VI. and VII., distinguished by his military genius and intrepidity, and possessed of princely revenues, but addicted to magic, and infamous by the murder of his wives, and his extraordinary debaucheries. *La Belle au Bois Dormant* seems to have been suggested by the sleep of Epimenides ; it is the best of the tales of Perrault, and first brought that species of writing into fashion. *Le Chat Botté* is from the 1st of the 11th night of Straparola, where the cat of Constantine procures his master a fine castle, and the heiress of a king. *Riquet a la Houpe* is also from Straparola, and the notion has been adopted and expanded by Madame Villeneuve, in the celebrated story *La Belle et la Bête*. In *Le Petit Poucet*, the residence with the ogre is taken from Ulysses in the cave of Polyphemus, or the 4th story of the first young man in the *Bahar Danush*, and the mode of extrication, from the mythological fable

of Theseus and Ariadne. To each of these tales a moral is added in bad verse, and some sort of lesson may, no doubt, be extracted from most of them; thus, the scope of *Le Petit Chaperon Rouge* is to warn young people to distrust flatterers; and that of *Barbe Bleue* to repress curiosity. In *Le Maître Chat, ou Le Chat Botté*, we learn that talents are equivalent to fortune; and from *Le Petit Poucet*, that, with spirit and address, the most defenceless of mankind may escape from the oppression of the most powerful.

The tales of Perrault are the best of the sort that have been given to the world. They are chiefly distinguished for their simplicity, for the *naïve* and familiar style in which they are written, and an appearance of implicit belief on the part of the relater, which perhaps gives us additional pleasure, from our knowledge of the profound attainments of the author, and his advanced age at the period of their composition.

Soon after the appearance of the tales of Perrault, and towards the close of the reign of Louis XIV., the court of France assumed a serious and moral aspect, and it became fashionable to write libraries for the instruction and amusement of his young and royal descendants. At the same time there were a number of ladies of considerable rank

and fortune, who lived much together, and cultivated literature with some success. Every one was tired of the long romances; they required too much time and application, and such novels as Marianne demanded too much genius for every lady of quality to attempt with any prospect of success. Fairy tales, like those of Perrault, were accordingly considered as best adapted to the entertainment and general reputation of the society.

The very circumstance, too, of such a man as Perrault having employed himself in this species of composition, rescued it from the imputation of childishness, with which it might have been otherwise stigmatized. That occupation could hardly be considered as a trivial employment for a woman of fashion, which had engaged the attention of a profound academician, and who had besides recommended this mode of writing to the female world, in the dedication to one of his tales :—

Les Fables plairont jusqu' aux plus grands esprits,  
 Si vous voulez belle Comtesse,  
 Par vos heureux talens orner de tels recits ;  
 L'antique Gaule vous en presse :  
 Daignez donc mettre dans leurs jours  
 Les Contes ingenus quoique remplis d'adresse,  
 Qu'ont inventé les Troubadours ;  
 Le sens mystérieux que leur tour enveloppe  
 Egale bien celui d'Esopé.

The Countess D'Aulnoy, Madame Murat, and Mademoiselle de la Force,<sup>1</sup> who were nearly contemporaries, and wrote in the very commencement of the 18th century, were the ladies chiefly eminent for this species of composition. In the tales of Perrault, the decorations of marvellous machinery are sparingly employed. The moral is principally kept in view, and supernatural agency is only introduced where, by this means, the lesson meant to be conveyed can be more successfully inculcated. But the three ladies now before us seem to have vied with each other in excluding nature from their descriptions, and to have written under the impression, that she must bear away the palm whose palace was lighted by the greatest profusion of carbuncles, whose dwarf was most diminutive and hideous, and whose chariot was drawn by the most unearthly monsters. Events bordering on probability were carefully abstained from, and the most marvellous thing in these tales, as Fontenelle has remarked, is, when a person shipwrecked in the middle of the ocean has the misfortune to be drowned.

The tales of the Countess D'Aulnoy, who is the most voluminous of all fairy writers, want the sim-

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, No. 11.

plicity of those of Perrault, but possess a good deal of wit, and liveliness. Her best stories are *L'Oiseau Bleu*, and *Le Prince Lutin*, which is perhaps the most airy and sprightly tale in the *Bibliothèque Bleue*. She has also written *La Belle aux Cheveux d'or*, *Le Rameau d'or*, and *Gracieuse et Percinet*, which seems to have been suggested by the tasks imposed on *Psyche*, in the story of *Cupid and Psyche* in *Apuleius*. A good many, as *Fortunée*, *Le Nain Jaune*, *Le Biche au Bois*, are introduced as episodes of two Spanish novels, entitled *Ponce de Leon*, and *Don Ferdinand de Toledo*, of which the first is a most beautiful and romantic story. Still more numerous are the tales inclosed in the frame of a story, entitled *Le Gentilhomme Bourgeois*, of which *La Chatte Blanche* is the best, though also the most wonderful. In the incidents of these tales there is little invention, most of them being taken, with scarce any variation, from the *Pentamerone* of *Basile*, or the *Nights of Straparola*. Thus, for example, in the first of the second night, there is the story of a queen of England, who was inconsolable for her want of children. At length, three fairies traverse the air while she is asleep. The first decrees that her majesty should become pregnant of a son, the second that the prince should be en-

duced with every moral and intellectual perfection, but the third determines that he should come into the world in the shape of a pig, and that he should retain this unfortunate figure until he had married three wives, and received the voluntary caresses of the last. The prince, as was to be expected, wallows in the mire in his early years, and is a great expence for perfumes to his governess and valet de chambre. When full-grown, he is successively united to two ladies, who attempt to murder him, in consequence of which a separation takes place. His mental accomplishments, however, at length so far engage the affections of a beautiful princess, that she overlooks the personal disadvantages under which he laboured, and by this means her husband acquires the shape more usually borne by his species. This story will be at once recognised as *Le Prince Marcassin* of *Mad. D'Aulnoy*. Her other imitations from *Straparola* have been pointed out while treating of the works of that novelist. (See above, vol. II. p. 449.)

In the tales of *Madame Murat*, there is neither the simplicity of those of *Perrault*, nor the liveliness of those of *D'Aulnoy*. She writes *Le Parfait amour*—*Anguilette*—*Jeune et Belle*. Her best is *Le Palais de Vengeance*, where an enchanter,

being enamoured of a princess who refused to requite his affection, shut her up in a delicious palace, with the lover for whose sake she had rejected his suit. Here, as the magician expected, they were speedily reduced to a state of *ennui*, resembling that of Mad. du Deffan and the President Henault, during the day which they had agreed to devote to each other's society.

Mademoiselle de la Force, who is author of *Plus belle que Feé*, *L'Enchanteur*, *Tourbillon*, *Vert et Bleu*, has outdone all her competitors in marvellous extravagance. Enchanted palaces of opal or diamond were becoming vulgar accommodations, and this lady introduced the luxury of a palace flying from place to place, with all its pleasure grounds and gardens along with it.

Though the tales of the three ladies above-mentioned are very different in point of style, there runs through them a great uniformity of incident. The principal characters are in the most exalted situations of life, they are either paragons of beauty or monsters of deformity; and if there be more than one princess in a family, the youngest, as in the case of *Psyche*, is invariably the most amiable and most lovely. Fairies, who aid or overturn the schemes of mortals, are an essential ingredient. The tale usually begins with the ac-

**Y**ouchement of a queen, at which some fairy presides, or is indignant at not having presided, and generally ends with the nuptials of an enamoured prince and princess. It commonly happens that the lady is shut up in an enchanted palace. Hence the sagacity and valour of a prince are employed for her deliverance, and in this enterprise he must be aided by a benevolent fairy, whom he has most likely propitiated by services unwittingly performed when she was in the shape of some degraded animal. Love and envy are the only passions brought into action: all the distresses arise from confinement, metamorphosis, or the imposition of unreasonable tasks.

About the same period with these ladies, a number of inferior writers, as the authors of *La Tyrannie des Fées détruite*, and *Contes moins contes que les autres*, attempted similar compositions. They were more recently followed in the *Boca ou la Vertu Récompensée* of Mad. Marchand, written in 1735; as also in *Le Prince Invisible* and *le Prince des Aigues Marins* of Mad. Leveque, whose tales are remarkable for the fine verses introduced, and the delicacy of the sentiments. *Les Feeries Nouvelles* is the title of a number of tales by the Count de Caylus, who, leaving the Egyptians, Etruscans, and Gauls, has related his stories with



a simplicity, *naïveté*, and sarcastic exposure of foibles in character, which could hardly be expected from one who had laboured so much in the mines of antiquity. *Les Contes Marins de Mad. Villeneuve*, published in 1740, are so termed because related by an old woman to a family while on their passage to St Domingo. The best known of these tales is *La Belle et La Bete*, the first part of which, perhaps, surpasses all that has been produced by the lively and fertile imaginations of France or Arabia. *Les Soirées Bretonnes*, by Guculette, so well known by his numerous imitations of the eastern tales, also possessed considerable reputation. This volume is partly imitated from an Italian work, entitled *Peregrinaggio de tre figliuoli del Re de Serendippo*, and the stories it contains are feigned to have been related in the course of a number of evenings, to relieve the melancholy of a princess of Britany, as those in the *Peregrinaggio* had been told to console Sultan Behram for the loss of his favourite queen, whom that Mirror of Justice and Mercy had condemned to be torn to pieces by lions on account of an ill-timed jest on his skill in archery. The search for the *Cynogefore*, in the *Soirées Bretonnes*, and which also occurs in the Italian work, has given rise to the pursuit of the bitch and the horse, a

well known incident in Voltaire's *Zadig*. There is also, both in the *Peregrinaggio* and *Soirées Bretonnes*, the story of an eastern king who possessed the power of animating a dead body by flinging his own soul into it; but having incautiously shot himself into the carcase of a fawn which he had killed while hunting, his favourite vizier, to whom he had confided the secret whereby this transmigration was accomplished, occupied the royal corpse, which had been thus left vacant, and returned to the palace, where he personated his master. At length the king had an opportunity of passing into the remains of a parrot, in which shape he allowed himself to be taken captive and presented to the queen. The vizier afterwards, in order to gratify her majesty by a display of his mysterious science, animated the carcase of a favourite bird which had died, when the king seized the opportunity of re-entering his own body, which the vizier had now abandoned, and instantly twisted off the neck of his treacherous minister.

This story is so universal that it has been also related, with a slight variation of circumstances, in the *Bahar Danush*, (c. 45 and 46),—in the *Persian Tales*, whence it has been copied in No. 578 of the *Spectator*,—in a mystical romance by Francis Beroalde, and in the *Illustres Feés*, under title

*Le Bienfaisant ou Quiribirini.* The last mentioned collection contains a good many other fairy-tales, which have become well known and popular. Few of them, however, have been invented by the authors;—*Blanchebelle* is taken from the third of the third night of *Straparola*, and *Fortunio* from the fourth of the third of the same novelist. (See above, vol. II. p. 450.)

Besides those that have been enumerated, there were an infinite number of tales inserted in the *Mercure de France*, many of which were anonymous, and afterwards appeared in different collections, as *La Bibliothèque des Fées et des Génies*, by the *Abbe de la Porte*. The most eminent men in France disdained not to contribute to these collections, as appears from *La Reine Fantasque* of *Rousseau*, the *Aglac ou Nabotine* of the Painter *Coyvel*, and the *Acajou et Zirphile* of *M. Duclos*.

I may here mention, though they can hardly be denominated fairy tales, the *Veilles de Thessalie* of *Mad. de Lussan*, which are chiefly stories of incantation and magic. They turn on what once formed the popular superstitions of Thessaly, and those enchantments, of which illusion is the chief, supposed to have been practised by certain persons in that part of Greece. The work of *Apuleius* probably suggested that of *Madaune Lussan*. It is

strange she has had no imitators, considering the novel and impressive machinery she has made use of, and the admirable manner in which in some of the stories, especially the first, it has been employed by her.

Every person is aware of the wonderful popularity which those productions, known by the name of *Contes des Fées*, enjoyed for many years in France. The Comte de Caylus says, in his preface to *Cadichon*, written in 1768, "*Les Contes des Fées* sont été long tems à la mode, et dans ma jeunesse on ne lisoit gueres que cela dans le monde."

A species of tale of a totally different tone from that with which we have been engaged, and which had its foundation in eastern manners and mythology, was also prevalent in France at the same period with the fairy tales of European birth. These oriental fictions had their origin in the encouragement extended to Asiatic literature in the reign of Louis XIV., the eagerness with which the translations of the Arabian and Persian tales were received by the public, and the facility afforded to this species of composition by the information concerning eastern manners, communicated in the *Bibliothèque Orientale* of D'Herbelot, and the *Travels* of Chardin.

In the eastern mythology, those imaginary be-

ings, believed to be intermediate between God and man, are more numerous, and their attributes more striking, than in the superstitions of any other region. It was believed that before the creation of Adam the world was inhabited by genii, of whom some were called Peris and others Dives. Of these, the former were beautiful in person and amiable in disposition, and were contrasted with the latter, who were of inauspicious appearance and malevolent temper. After the formation of man, these beings retired in a great measure from earth to a region of their own, called Ginnistan, a very remote empire, but continued occasionally to intermeddle in sublunary affairs—the Peris employing themselves for the benefit, and the Dives for the ruin, of mankind. Both frequently instructed mortals in their arts or knowledge, who thus became enchanterers or magicians, and were evil or well disposed, according to the frame of mind of their teachers. This mythology is the foundation of those eastern tales, which produced so many imitations in France. Next to this species of machinery, the most characteristic feature of these compositions is the peculiar manners and state of society delineated, especially that despotism which regards as nothing the lives and fortunes of mankind, and which, even without the intervention of

supernatural agency, produces a quick transition from misfortune to prosperity, or from a state of the highest elevation to one of complete dejection.

The indolence peculiar to the genial climates of Asia, and the luxurious life which the kings and other great men led in their seraglios, made them seek for this species of amusement, and set a high value on the recreation it afforded. Being ignorant, and consequently credulous, and having little passion for moral improvement, or knowledge of nature, they did not require that these tales should be probable or of an instructive tendency: it was enough if they were astonishing. Hence most oriental tales are extravagant, and their incidents are principally carried on by prodigy. As the taste, too, of the hearers was not improved by studying the simplicity of nature, and as they chiefly piqued themselves on the splendour of their equipage, and the vast quantity of jewels and curious things which they could heap together in their repositories, the authors, conformably to this taste, expatiate with peculiar delight in the description of magnificence, of rich robes and gaudy furniture, costly entertainments, and sumptuous palaces.

Of all eastern stories, the most celebrated, at least in Europe, are the Arabian Tales, or the

**Thousand and One Nights.** These are supposed to have been written after the period of the Arabian conquests in the west, and probably between the end of the 13th and close of the 14th century. It may indeed be fairly conjectured that they were not composed till the military spirit of the Arabians had in some degree abated. Heroes and soldiers perform no part in these celebrated tales of wonder, and the only classes of men exhibited are cadis, merchants, calenders, and slaves. In the story, too, of the Barber, some event is recorded as having happened during the reign of Monstancer Billah, the 36th caliph of the race of the Abassides, and who was raised to that dignity in the 623d year of the Hegira, that is, in 1226. Whether the Arabian Nights are a collection of oriental romances, or the production of a single genius, has been much disputed. It is most likely that they were written in their present form by one individual, but that, like the *Decameron*, or *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, the incidents were borrowed from various sources—the traditions of Arabia, and even of Persia, Hindostan, and Greece. The story of Polyphemus is in the third voyage of Sinbad. Other parts of the adventures of that bold mariner seem to be borrowed from the *History of Aristomenes*, in Pausanias; and we also find in-

corporated in the Arabian Tales, the traditions concerning Phædra and Circe, and the story of Joseph with characteristic decorations.

The Heecotopades had probably suggested to the Arabian writer the idea of inclosing his stories in a frame, and from his example this plan has been adopted in all similar compositions. The frame of the Arabian Tales is less complex and involved than that of the Hecotopades, but is not very ingenious. A sultan, as is well known, irritated by the infidelity of his wife, resolves to espouse a new sultana every evening, and to strangle her in the morning, to prevent the accidents of the day. At length the daughter of the vizier solicits the hand of this indulgent bridegroom, interrupts the progress of these frequent and sanguinary nuptials, and saves her own life by the relation of tales, in which she awakens and suspends the sultan's curiosity. Her husband was perhaps as childish in his clemency as absurd in his cruelty, yet the stories are so interesting, that, as a French critic has remarked, there is no one but would have insisted to learn the conclusion, could he have exclaimed with his majesty, "*Je la ferai toujours bien mourir demain.*" The stories are too well known, and too numerous, to admit of analysis; their chief merit consists in the admirable delineation of eastern



manners, the knavery of slaves, the hypocrisy of dervises, the corruption of judges, the baneful influence of that despotism which has remained the same amid all Asiatic revolutions, and the boldness and artifice of the women, who risk so much the more in proportion to the rigour with which they are confined. The sultana, indeed, which has been considered a defect in these tales, seems merely intent on saving her life, and appears to have had no design, by the tendency of the stories, to convince her husband of the fidelity and virtue of woman.

In the Persian Tales, on the other hand, where there is a princess as much prepossessed against the male sex as the sultan in the Arabian Nights against the female, the scope of all the stories is to persuade the fair one that there exist such things as lasting attachment and conjugal felicity. A princess of Caschmire was of such resplendent beauty, that all who had the misfortune to behold her lost their reason, or fell into a languishing state, by which they were insensibly destroyed. The king, her father, soon perceived that his dominions were about to be depopulated, or converted into a capacious bedlam. He, therefore, shut up his daughter in a tower, and engaged her nurse to overcome her aversion to matrimony by the rela-

tion of tales, most of which, accordingly, furnish some example of a faithful lover or affectionate husband. The delicacy of the princess is never to be satisfied, and she has always some exception to make against the tenderness or ardour of attachment in the hero of the tale. This gives rise to a new narrative, in which the nurse attempts to realize the *beau idéal* of her fastidious *cleve*; but it requires the stories of a thousand and one days to overcome her obduracy. In these tales there is more delicacy, but less vigour and invention, than in the Arabian, which is perhaps consistent with the character and genius of the nations by which they were produced. It is ascertained that they were written at a period long subsequent to the Arabian Nights. They are also supposed to be the work of a dervish, which has been inferred from the number of traditions drawn from Mahometan mythology, and that hatred which the stories breathe to the religion of the magi, which was overthrown by the successors of the prophet.

The Arabian and Persian tales were translated into French, the former by Galland, the latter by Petis de la Croix and Le Sage, and were published in the beginning of the 18th century. Both have been manufactured for the European market,

and additional wonders and enchantments woven into them :—

Et, loin de se perdre en chemin,  
Parurent sortant de chez Barbin  
Plus Arabe qu' en Arabie.

Petis de la Croix is also the translator of *L'Histoire de la Sultane de Perse et des Visirs, Contes Turcs*, a work founded on the story of Erastus, or the Seven Wise Masters, and attributed to Checzone, preceptor of Amurath second. In this collection we have the story of Santon Barsisa, a holy man, who had spent his life in a grotto in fasting and prayer. He obtained the reputation of a chosen favourite of Heaven, and it was believed that when he made vows for the health of a sick person, the patient was immediately cured. The daughter of the king of the country being seized with a dangerous illness, was sent to the Santon, to whom the devil presented himself on this occasion. Our hermit, yielding to his suggestion, declared that it was necessary for her cure that the princess should pass the night in the hermitage. This being agreed to, "Le Santon," says the French translation, "*dementit en un moment une vertu de cent années !*" He is led from the com-

mission of one crime to another : to conceal his shame he murders the princess, buries her body at the entrance of the grotto, and informs her attendants, on their return in the morning, that she had already left the hermitage. The dead body is afterwards discovered by information of the devil, and the Santon is brought to condign punishment. In this situation the demon appears, and promises to bear him away if he consent to worship him ; but the Evil Spirit has no sooner received a sign of adoration, than he leaves Barsisa to the mercy of the executioner.

This tale was originally told by Saadi, the celebrated Persian poet, in a species of sermon, where it is quoted as a parable, along with other ingenious and applicable stories. It was imitated in Europe at an early period, in one of the *Contes Devots*, entitled *De L'Hermite que le Diable trompa*, a tale of which Le Grand enumerates four different versions (vol. V. p. 229). From the *Turkish Tales* it was at length inserted in the *Guardian*, and became the origin of Lewis's *Monk*, where Ambrosio, a monk of the highest reputation for eloquence and sanctity in Madrid, is persuaded by an evil spirit in human shape to violate the beautiful Antonia, and after-

wards to murder her, in order that his guilt might be concealed. These crimes being detected, he is hurried to the dungeons of the Inquisition, where the devil being invoked, agrees to deliver him from confinement, on condition that he should make over his soul to him in perpetuity. Ambrosio having ratified this contract, is borne away in the talons of the demon, who afterwards tears and dashes him to pieces amid the cliffs of the Sierra Morena.

The History of Dr Faustus, as it has been dramatized by Goethe, is a similar tale. Faustus, a wise and learned man, is amorously tempted by the devil, and after being led by his suggestion from one excess to another, is finally carried off by him to perdition.

The stupendous incident and gorgeous machinery of the oriental tales soon attracted notice, and made a strong impression on the fancy. Figurative style, and wild invention, are easily imitated. Manners, which are marked and peculiar, but of which the minute shades are not very accurately known, are easily described. Accordingly, the imitators of oriental fiction have given us abundance of jewels and eunuchs, cadis, necromancers, and slaves. Their personages are all Mahometans or Pagans, who are subject to the

despotic sway of caliphs, bashaws, and viziers, who drink sherbet, rest on sophas, and ride on camels or dromedaries.

Gueulette is the principal French imitator of oriental tales. He is the author of *Les mille et un quart d'heure*, *Contes Tartares*, which resemble the Persian and Arabian tales, both in the frame by which they are introduced, and the nature of the stories themselves.

A dervis, who, we are told by this author, dwelt in the neighbourhood of Astracan, returning one evening to his cell, found it occupied by a new-born infant. He confided the child to the wife of a tailor of Astracan, from whom he was accustomed to receive alms. The foundling was called *Schems-Eddin*, and was brought up to the trade of his reputed father. In his youth he is seen and admired by one of the fair inhabitants of the *seraglio*, and is privately sent for on pretence that she wishes him to make her a habit. At one of the interviews which follow this message, he is surprised by the arrival of the king, who, when about to sacrifice the lovers to his jealousy, is himself slain by *Schems-Eddin*. It is now ascertained, by an account given by an old sultana, that *Schems-Eddin* is the son of the king of Astracan, whom he had just killed, and that he had been

exposed in his infancy in consequence of the prediction of an astrologer, that he was destined to murder his father. Schems-Eddin ascends the throne of Astracan, and espouses the object of his affections, but being still tormented with remorse for the involuntary assassination of his parent, he sets out with his sultana on a pilgrimage of expiation to Mecca. While returning the sultana falls sick, and being believed dead she is inclosed in a magnificent coffin. The sultan is next attacked by a tribe of Bedouin Arabs ; he is left for dead on the plain, and deprived of the coffin in which his consort was enshrined. On his arrival at Astracan, he finds his throne occupied by an usurper, his eyes are put out, and he is thrown into a dungeon. A counter revolution restores him to power and liberty, but his physicians in vain attempt to find a remedy for his blindness. At length one of their number declares that in the Isle of Serendib (Ceylon) there is a tree, and on that tree sat a bird, round whose neck hung a phial containing a liquor, which was a specific in the most obdurate cases of ophthalmia. The physician is despatched to procure a supply of this liquor. During his absence the king was accustomed to pass an hour in public, and a fourth part of this space was devoted to conversation with sages, or spent in lis-

tening to the adventures of those strangers who frequented his court. His viziers, however, began to be afraid that this fund of amusement would be at length exhausted. Accordingly, the son of the physician who had gone to Serendib, and who, it seems, was a great reader, and possessed a retentive memory, undertook to amuse his majesty till the return of his father, by the relation of stories for a quarter of an hour each day

In the tales thus introduced there is little originality of invention. The machinery and decorations are borrowed from oriental tales, and a great number of the incidents from the *Nights of Straparola*. *L'Histoire de Sinadab fils du Medecin Sacan* is from the first tale in that work. An old man recommended to his son never to attach himself to a prince, never to reveal a secret to his wife, nor to foster a child of which he was not the father. Sinadab, however, by his talents and virtues, became the chief favourite of a monarch, whose sister he espoused; and, having no children, he brought up the son of one of his slaves as his own. He was now completely happy and prosperous, and laughed at the dotage of his father. In course of time he revealed a trifling transgression as a secret to his wife. She immediately informed her brother, and he was instantly



condemned to death by his ungrateful master. So popular, however, had been his character, that no one could be found to cut off his head, till Roumy, his adopted son, voluntarily offered to perform this office. In Straparola, a Genoese merchant gives similar advice to his son, and his neglect of it is attended with like consequences. The story of *Le Chien de Sahed* and *Cadi of Candahar*, is a tale already mentioned, as occurring in the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, and in an infinite number of other fabulous productions, (see above, vol. ii. p. 486.) *Les Bossus de Damas* is from the fabliau *Les Trois Bossus*, and *Le Centaure Bleue* from the 1st of the 4th of Straparola. A few, as the history of *Feridoun* and *Mahalem*, king of Borneo, are told by Khondemir, and other oriental writers. *L'Histoire de Faruk*, where a son refuses to contend with his brothers for the sovereignty, by shooting an arrow at the dead body of his father, is the Fabliau *Le Jugement de Solomon*, (*Le Grand*, vol. ii. p. 426.) or 45th chapter of *Gesta Romanorum*. Another part of the same story, where a judge discovers that his son had been guilty of a robbery, by a ring which he had obtained from him, is from the tale related in the *Arabian Nights* by a Jew physician, (see vol. ii. N. 156.) The story *Du vieux Calender* corresponds

with the Two Dreams in the Seven Wise Masters, and with the Fabliau *Le Chevalier a la Trappe*. It is a curious coincidence in fiction, that these three stories are the same with the plot of the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus, said to be taken from a Greek play, entitled *Αλαζων*.

*L' Histoire d'Alcouz, Taher, et du Meunier*, which contains an exaggerated picture of female infidelity, is precisely the fifth novel of the *Prin- temps of Jaques Yver*, printed in 1575.

These tales chiefly turn on sudden vicissitudes and changes of fortune. They are far inferior to the genuine eastern tales, but are regarded as the best of the French imitations.

The stories are at length terminated by the return of the physician with the precious eye-water. On arriving at Ceylon, the emissary found that the tree could only be ascended in safety by a woman who had never failed in fidelity to her husband. No one was willing to risk the experiment, but it was at length undertaken by the sultana of Astracan, who, though believed dead by her husband, had been discovered to be alive by the Arabs. Having escaped from their power, but having missed her way, she had arrived at the court of the king of Ceylon on her road from Arabia to Astracan. She now accompanied the physician to the empire of

her husband, who prized the salutary medicine she brought not merely as a restorative to sight, but as an unexceptionable testimony to the unaltered affections of his sultana.

Gueulette is also author of *Les Contes Chinois, ou les Aventures merveilleuses du Mandarin Fum-Hoam*. These tales are introduced in the following manner :—An emissary is despatched by a Chinese monarch to Circassia, with orders to procure for his master the most beautiful females of that country. He returns with a large and well-chosen selection, and accompanied at the same time by the king and princess of Georgia, whom he had met in the course of his mission, and to whom, as they had been expelled their kingdom by an usurper, he had offered an asylum at his residence in Tonquin. The Chinese monarch beholds with perfect indifferencè the compliant beauties of Circassia, but becomes deeply enamoured of the Georgian refugee. Anxious, however, to ascertain if he can gain her affections, divested of the lustre of a diadem, he attempts to win her heart in the assumed character of the brother of her host, while she is, at the same time, courted by a mandarin, who was instructed to personate his sovereign. When the triumph of the Georgian princess is completed by her acceptance of the

offer, apparently least advantageous, she is united to her royal lover under his true name and character. The new queen stipulates for enjoyment of a free exercise of the Mahometan religion, but her husband, at the same time, undertakes to convert her to the doctrines of Chacabout, (especially that part of them in which the belief of the transmigration of souls was inculcated, the point on which she chiefly stickled,) by means of the sage discourses of the mandarin Fum-Hoam. This personage is every evening summoned into the august presence of his mistress, and relates with much gravity the various adventures which he had experienced in the different bodies his soul had animated, of every sex and situation. He had also occasionally passed into the form of inferior animals, as lap-dogs and fleas, which gave him an opportunity of witnessing and relating the most secret adventures.

*Les Sultanes de Guzaratte, ou Les Songes des Hommes éveillés, Contes Mogols*, is from the same prolific pen as the Chinese and Tartar Tales. The sultan of Guzaratte, a district in the Mogul empire, had four wives, with whom he lived, and who lived together for many years in the utmost harmony. Smitten at length with the charms of a Circassian beauty, he associates her in the empire,

and, in a great measure, withdraws his confidence and affection from the elder sultanas. At the end of fifteen years he begins to doubt the fidelity of his Circassian favourite, and in some degree to repent of the neglect with which he had treated her rivals. Wishing to discover their secret thoughts and sentiments, he consults a celebrated cabalist, by whose advice he transports his wives to a palace, so constructed that from a certain apartment every thing was seen and heard that was done or said in the interior of the building. The sultanas being lodged in this magical dwelling, their husband next spreads a report of his death, and occasionally repairs to the palace, in order to witness, unseen, the manner in which they pass the days of their imagined widowhood. After the period of mourning is elapsed, the sultanas employ certain persons to watch at the caravansary, to give the travellers who arrive a sleeping potion, and bear them to the palace, in order that on the following day they might entertain these ladies with a detail of their adventures. All the tales in the work are stories thus introduced. The last party conveyed to the residence of the sultanas consists of a company of dancers and comedians, one of whom the Circassian espouses, to the great indignation of the sultan.

Les Contes Orientaux of the Count de Caylus, are related to a king of Persia, afflicted with a *coma vigil*, in order to lull him asleep. In this work, L'Histoire de la Corbeille, which is announced as "plus longue que celle de Feredbaad," and "plus triste que celle de Wamakweazra," is the story of a prosperous and happy monarch, at whose court a dervis arrives, plunged in profound melancholy. The king being desirous to learn the occasion of his sadness, is informed by him that he can only ascertain its cause by repairing to a certain city in China. Thither the sultan departs, and on his arrival finds all its inhabitants overwhelmed with affliction. His curiosity being thus still farther excited, by the instructions of one of them, he throws himself into a basket which hung suspended over the walls of a ruinous castle, and is forthwith carried up with velocity to a delightful region, where he passes his time in all imaginable pleasures, and in the society of a woman of angelic charms. After a time he is let down in the basket to this lower region, for the amusements of which he has now lost all relish, and, like the dervis, passes the remainder of his days in vexation and disappointment, at the loss of those exquisite enjoyments of which he had partaken, and by which all others were rendered tasteless.

This story, which was originally intended as a moral fiction, to show that God has dealt mercifully with mankind, in not vouchsafing a clearer revelation of the joys of eternity, has prevailed all over the world, from the traditions of the Brahmins to the mythology of Scandinavia. It is related at full length in the story of Yezzez, contained in the 38th and two following chapters of the Bahar-Danush, and in the 19th fable of the Edda, where we are told that "Frey having ascended the throne of the Universal Father, and entered a magnificent palace in the middle of the city, saw a woman come out of it, whose hair was so bright that it gave lustre to the air and waters. At that sight, Frey, in punishment of his audacity in mounting that sacred throne, was struck with sudden sadness, insomuch, that after his descent he could neither speak, nor sleep, nor drink."

The tales of Count Hamilton, Fleur d'Epine and Les quatre Facardins, are chiefly intended as a satire on the taste then prevalent for oriental fiction. Fleur d'Epine is introduced as the last night of the Arabian Tales, and is related by the sister of the sultana. We are told, that a princess of Caschmire was so resplendently beautiful, that all who beheld her were struck blind or perished, a commencement intended to ridicule the early

part of the Persian tales. A prince in disguise, who, at this time, resided with the king's seneschal, offers, by the assistance of a fairy, to overcome the baleful effects, without diminishing the lustre of her charms. The fairy, to whom he alluded, had promised him this remedy on condition that he should rescue her daughter Fleur d' Epine, from the power of a malevolent enchantress, and should also dispossess her enemy of the musical horse and the cap of light. The story is occupied with this achievement, and the amours of Fleur d' Epine and the prince.

*Les quatre Facardins*, which is partly a fairy tale and partly a romance of chivalry, contains the adventures of the prince of Trebizonde, the lover of Dinarzade. It is intended as a general satire on all incredible adventures, but is far inferior in merit to *Fleur d' Epine*.

To the class of fairy and oriental tales may be referred that species of composition which in France was known under the title of *Voyages Imaginaires*, and which, in an historical account of fictitious writing, it would not be proper altogether to neglect. These productions bear the same relation to real voyages and travels as the common novel or romance to history and biography. They have been written with different views,



but are generally intended to exhibit descriptions, events, and subjects of instruction, which are not furnished by the scenes or manners of the real world. In some cases, as in *Robinson Crusoe*, mankind are led to appreciate their own exertions by seeing what their species is capable of when in perfect solitude, and abandoned to its own resources. In *l' Isle Inconnue* they are shown what they may attain when confined to domestic society, and excluded from all intercourse with the rest of the world. Sometimes the imaginary traveller is received among nations of perfect and ideal wisdom. At others, the author, seizing the advantages presented by shipwrecks and pirates, throws his characters on some inhospitable shore, the fancied distance of which entitles him to people it with all sorts of prodigies and monsters. The planets, too, and centre of the earth were made the theatres of these chimerical expeditions, which, even in their most common form, are entertaining ; and in their more improved state have sometimes become, as in the case of the celebrated work of Swift, the vehicle of the keenest satire, and even of philosophical research.

The origin of this species of fiction may be attributed to the *True History* of Lucian. *Homer's Odyssey*, however, in which that poet talks

of the Anthropophagi and giants with one eye in their forehead, is the remote original of this sort of fabling. Ctesias, the Cnidian, reported many incredible tales in his history of the Indians, and Iamblichus still more equivocal relations in his Wonders of the Sea. These persons, however, were *bona fide* historians, or at least were serious in wishing to impose on their readers. The work of Lucian is the first that is professedly fabulous, though no doubt suggested by the false relations of these writers. Indeed, the satirist himself acquaints us that every thing he says glances at some one of the old poets or historians who have recorded untruths which are incredible.

Lucian relates, that, prompted by curiosity, he sailed from the pillars of Hercules and launched into the western ocean. For some time he had a prosperous voyage, but was at length overtaken by a tempest, which, after two months continuance, drove him on a delightful island, where he saw many wonders. The rivers there were of wine; and the summit of the trees were women from the waist upwards; to these a few of the crew were for ever transfixed by hazarding some gallantries. Those mariners who with Lucian again launched into the deep, were speedily carried into the air by a whirlwind, and borne with immense velocity

towards a shining land, which, on reaching it, they discovered to be the moon. They were here saluted by men riding on monstrous vultures, who conducted them to the court of their king, who proved to be the well-known Endymion. That prince was engaged in a war with Phaeton, king of the Sun ; the two potentates having quarrelled with regard to their right of colonizing the Morning Star. The strangers were graciously received by his lunar majesty, who begged their assistance in the ensuing campaign, and, as an inducement, offered to furnish each with a prime vulture. This proposition being agreed to, Lucian set out with the lunar army and auxiliaries from the constellation of the Bear, who were mounted on fleas of the dimensions of elephants. A swarm of spiders, which accompanied the army, was detached to weave between the moon and morning star a web, which, when formed, was chosen as the field of battle. Here the troops of Endymion encountered the enemy, composed of the solar battalions and the allies from Sirius. In the engagement Lucian's friends were worsted, their king taken prisoner, and Lucian himself along with him. On the conclusion of peace, he attempted to return to the moon, but was driven into the sea, where he was swallowed up by a whale, in whose interior

there are immense regions, with forests and cities, and wars are carried on by the inhabitants. Lucian and his companions at length extricated themselves by setting fire to the woods, which consumed the monster. They next sailed through a sea of milk, and came to an island of cheese, &c. &c.

In the *True History of Lucian*, the satire is too broad and exaggerated. His work is a heap of extravagancies, put together without order or unity, and his wonders are destitute of every colour of plausibility. "Animal trees," says Dr Beattie in his excellent *Essay on Poetry*, "ships sailing in the sky—armies of monstrous things travelling between the sun and moon on a pavement of cobwebs—rival nations of men inhabiting woods and mountains in a whale's belly, are liker the dreams of a bedlamite than the inventions of a rational being."

The spirit of those extravagant relations satirized by Lucian never was extinguished, and fictitious embellishments were mingled even with genuine narrative. The inclination for the marvellous, which prevailed during the dark ages, was not confined to romances of chivalry, but pervaded every department of literature and science. This

led to a similar style in the relations of those travellers, who described remote countries. Such productions would have been little attractive to their readers, unless filled with wonders of nature and superhuman productions of art. Accordingly, Benjamin, a Jew of Tudela, who penetrated through Persia to the frontiers of China, about the middle of the 12th century, and Marco Polo, a Venetian nobleman, who visited the same regions a hundred years afterwards, related in the account of their travels many marvellous and romantic stories. The work of Mandeville was translated in the 15th century into almost all the languages of the continent, and was published in the collection of Ramusio. At the same time the *Mirabilia mundi* of Solinus, which contains many wonderful relations in the style of the *Voyages Imaginaires*, was early translated into French, and became a popular work.

The Travels of Ferdinand Mendez Pinto, whom Addison terms a person of infinite adventure and unbounded imagination, was the type of incidents which were indeed professedly fictitious, but which were scarcely more incredible.

We also meet with an example of the more philosophical class of the *Voyages Imaginaires* in the

Arabian story of Hai Ebn Yokdhan, written by Ebn-Tophail, a Mahometan philosopher, who was contemporary with Averroes, and lived towards the close of the twelfth century, in some part of the Saracenic dominions in Spain. This work was translated by Moses Narbonensis into Hebrew, and into Latin by Mr Pococke, 1671. There have been several English versions through the medium of the Latin, and one from the original Arabic by Simon Ockley, published in 1708.

In the spiritual romance of Josaphat and Barlaam, we have beheld a prince immured from the world, gradually acquire, by meditation, moral notions and ideas of disease and of death. Previous, also, to the time of Ebn-Tophail, and in the beginning of the 11th century, this system of self-improvement had been exemplified in a tract by the celebrated Avicenna, whose work is an outline of that of Ebn-Tophail. In the sketch by Avicenna, it is feigned that a human being was produced in a delightful but uninhabited island, without the intervention of mortal parents, by mere concourse of the elements—a notion not unlike the systems of Democritus and Epicurus, as explained by Lucretius, (B. 2.) The being, hatched in this unusual manner, though destitute of instruction, obtained, by exertion, what was most essential to

personal convenience, and finally arrived, by meditation, at the abstract truths of religion. This idea has been more fully developed by Ebn-Top-hail, whose chief design is to show that human capacity, unassisted by external help, may not only supply outward wants, but attain to a knowledge of all objects of nature, and so, by degrees, discover a dependence on a Superior Being, the immortality of the soul, and other doctrines necessary to salvation.

We are told by this Arabian writer, that there was an island in the Indian Ocean, and lying under the equinoctial line, which was governed by a king of proud and tyrannical disposition. This prince had a sister of exquisite beauty, whom he confined in a tower, and restrained from marriage, because he could not match her with one suitable to her quality. Nevertheless this lady had been privately espoused by a young man of the name of Yokdhan, and, in consequence of this union, gave birth to a son. Dreading the resentment of her brother, she set the child afloat in a little chest, which the tide carried on the same night to an uninhabited island at no great distance. As the tide rose higher than usual, it deposited the chest in a shady grove, which stood near the shore, and there left it on receding. Here Ebn-Yokdhan

(for that was the name the child had received when exposed by his mother) was suckled by a roe. As the boy grew up he followed his nurse, which showed all imaginable tenderness, and, being unusually intelligent, carried him to places where fruit-trees grew, and fed him with the ripest and the sweetest of their produce. At mid-day, when the sunbeams were fierce, she shaded him; at night, she cherished and kept him warm. In time she accustomed him to go with the herds of deer, among which he gained many ideas, and received various impressions, gradually acquiring the desire of some things, and an aversion for others. In noting the properties of different animals, he did not fail to remark that they were all provided with defensive weapons, as hoofs, horns, or claws, while he was naked and unarmed, whence he always came off with the worst whenever there happened any controversy about gathering the fruits which fell from the trees. He farther observed that his companions were clothed with hair, wool, or feathers, while he was exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather. When about seven years of age, he bethought himself of supplying the defects of which he had been thus rendered conscious, and in the first instance made himself a covering.



of the skin and feathers of a dead eagle. Soon after this, the demise of his nurse the roe opened a wide field of speculation. It imparted to him the notion of the dissolution of the body, and led him to enquire concerning the Being which he conjectured must have left it—what it was, and how it subsisted—what joined it to the body, and whither it had departed.

A fire having one day been accidentally kindled by collision of some reeds, our Solitary obtained the advantages of light and heat in absence of the sun ; and, while trying the power of the flame by throwing substances into it, among other things he cast a piece of fish, which had been tossed on shore, and thus acquired the first rudiments of the culinary art.

Besides the covering which he had procured from the spoils of wild beasts, he made threads of their hair ; he also learned the art of building by observations on swallows nests, and he contrived to overtake other wild beasts by taming and mounting the fleetest of their number.

This first part of the life of Ebn-Yokdhan is entertaining enough, and bears a considerable resemblance to the adventures of Robinson Crusoe ; but, after all his external wants are supplied, and

he finds leisure for mental speculation, the work becomes extremely mystical, and in some places unintelligible. He, in the first place, examined the properties of all bodies in this sublunary world, as plants, minerals, &c. While contemplating the objects of nature, he conjectured that all these must have had some productive cause, and hence he acquired a general, but indefinite, idea of the Creator. From a desire to know him more distinctly, he directed his attention to the celestial bodies, of which the magnitude and movements increased his wonder and admiration. Having obtained a knowledge of the Supreme Being, he became desirous to ascertain by which of his own faculties he had comprehended this existence: He was thus led into a course of metaphysical speculation, and then of moral practice, which seems to have consisted in the adaptation of his conduct to certain far-fetched analogies with the heavenly orbs. At length he subtilized and refined to such a degree, that he excluded from his meditations, and even from his senses, all material objects; till, immersed in contemplation of the self-existent Being, and transported beyond the limits of this world, he enjoyed in his extacies that beatific vision to which Quietists, German Theoso-

phes, and other enthusiasts, in modern times, have aspired.

In this work there are, of course, many errors in theology and philosophy, as the former is Mahometan and the latter Aristotelian. The fundamental principles of the work are, that without the aids of instruction we may attain to a knowledge of all things necessary to salvation, and that in this world we may arrive, by contemplation, at an intuition of the Deity, a refined and abstract species of worship scarcely enjoyed in old times by the greatest favourites of Heaven, and of which no promise has been vouchsafed either in the Mosaic or Christian dispensation.

Many ages elapsed before any direct imitation appeared, either of the *Truc History* of Lucian, or the mystical production of Ebn-Tophail. At length, during a period when the physical theory of the world was yet unsettled, and the Cartesian hypothesis was struggling with other systems for victory, different works of this kind appeared. They served the purpose of giving an agreeable display of the topics which were then the fashionable subjects of enquiry, while their authors could throw in any new views, without risk, on the one hand, of injuring their reputation

in case these views should prove erroneous, and without the danger of shocking public prejudices on the other. The *Histoire Comique des estats et empires de la Lune* of Cyrano Bergerac, and *Les estats et empires du Soleil* by the same author, appear to have had both these objects in view. I shall give some account of the first and best of these works, as it is, with much probability, supposed to have influenced Swift in his adoption of the same method of writing, and has acquired a high reputation among the compositions of this description.

Both the works of Cyrano were posthumous, and are in some parts mutilated. The first of them, *De la Lune*, was published by a Mons. de Bret, who tells us, in his preface, that the father of Cyrano, "estoit un bon vieux Gentilhomme assez indifferent pour l' education de ses enfants." He also informs us, that the young man entered into the army, and became the most famous duellist of his age, having fought more than a hundred times, without one of his rencounters having been in his own quarrel. He was wounded at the siege of Arras in 1640, and in consequence of wounds, early dissipation, fatigue, and chagrin, died in the thirty-fifth year of his age.

The notion of writing an account of an imagi-

nary excursion to the moon, seems partly to have been suggested by the circumstance of the lunar world having become an object of curiosity among the philosophers of the day. In contradiction to the old opinion of the peripateticks, that the moon could not be a habitable world, on account of its unchangeable nature, Gilbert (Philosoph. magnet, c. 13 and 14,) Henry Leroy and Francisco Patri-zio explained at great length the appearances on which they founded an opposite system, while Hevelius, in his Selenographia, and Gassendi, indulged in some serio-comic speculations with regard to lunar rivers and mountains.

Hence Cyrano conceived the intention of representing, in an humorous point of view, those chiméras which some of his contemporaries had too gravely treated. To this he joined the plan of ridiculing the pedantry, the scholastic disputations of the age, and that deference to authority which was so long the bane of science. The notion of conveying this satire in the form of an imaginary excursion to the moon, was probably suggested by the Spanish work of Dominico Gonzales, of which a French translation was subsequently published, under title of *L'Homme dans la Lune, ou le Voyage Chimérique fait au Monde de la Lune, nouvellement decouvert par Dominique Gonzales*

Aventurier Espagnol, autrement dit le Courier Volant. Bayle is mistaken in supposing that Bergerac was in any degree indebted to the *Voyage to Australasia*, published under the fictitious name of Jaques Sadeur. That production is no doubt a *Voyage Imaginaire*, but the two works have little resemblance, and Bergerac was dead more than twenty years before the voyage of Sadeur was written by the infamous Gabriel de Foigni.

Bergerac begins the relation of his voyage to the moon by an account of a conversation which led him to meditate on that luminary. His contemplations ended in planning some method to go thither ; and, accordingly, having filled some phials with dew, he fixed them round his person, so that the heat of the sun, by attracting the dew, raised him from earth. He lighted in Canada, and gives us some astronomical conversations he there held with the governor. It would be needless to relate the method which he afterwards adopted to journey to the moon, in a species of elastic machine (of which the construction is not very clearly described,) or to detail the circumstances which at length rendered his flight successful. The fiction contrived by Bergerac to account for his flight, is much less happy than that of Dominico Gonzales,

who feigns that he had been drawn to the moon by ganzars—birds of passage which winter in that luminary.

After a long ascent, Cyrano finds himself between two moons, of which our earth was the largest, and at length he reaches the sphere of activity of the moon, towards which his feet then turn. This does not happen till he is considerably nearer the moon than the earth, and it is curious that he uses reasoning on the occasion not unlike what would be now employed by a Newtonian.—“ Car, disois-Je en moy-mesme, cette Masse (la lune) estant moindre que la nostre, il faut que la sphere de son activité ait aussi moins d'estendue, et que par consequent J' aye senty plus tard la force de son centre.”

At the entrance into the moon, a *hiatus* occurs in the work, of which there are several instances in the course of it, some of which perhaps were owing to the author himself, where a difficulty occurred not easily to be surmounted, and others probably to the editor, when a passage presented itself which was too free or indelicate. The beauties of the lunar country are painted with considerable felicity, though the description is not free from the affectation which was common among

French authors in the days of Bergerac.—“ Là le Printemps compose toutes les saisons—là les ruisseaux par un agreable murmure racontent leurs voyages aux cailloux : là mille petits gosiers emplumez font retentir la forest au bruit de leurs melodieuses chansons ; et la tremoussante assemblée de ces divins musiciens est si generale, qu’ il semble que chaque feuille dans les bois ait pris la langue et la figure d’un Rossignol—on ne sçait si les fleurs agitées par un doux Zephire courent plutost apres elles-mesmes, qu’ elles ne fuyent pour eschapper aux caresses de ce vent folatre.”

After walking half a league in a forest of jessamine and myrtle, Bergerac espies a beautiful and majestic youth reposing in the shade. With this personage, who had once been an inhabitant of our world, he enters into a conversation of which we have only fragments. He is soon afterwards less fortunate, in meeting with the Aborigines of the country, who are described as huge naked men, twelve cubits high, walking on all fours. By these he is considered as a little monster, and he is consigned to a mountebank, to be exhibited, like Gulliver, as a show—“ Ce Basteleur me porta a son logis, ou il m’instruisit a faire le Godenot, à passer les culbutes, à figurer des grimaces : et les après dinées il faisoit prendre a la porte un certain prix



de ceux qui me vouloient voir. Mais le ciel flechy de mes douleurs, et fasché de voir prophaner le Temple de son maitre, voulut qu' un jour comme J' estois attaché au bout d'une corde, avec laquelle le Charlatan me faisoit sauter pour divertir le monde, J'entendis la voix d'un homme qui me demanda en Grec qui J' estois. Je fus bien estonné d' entendre parler en ce pais-là comme en notre monde. Il m' interrogea quelque temps ; Je luy repondis, et luy contay en suite generalement toute l'entreprise et le succes de mon voyage : il me consola, et Je me souviens qu'il me dit : Hé bien, mon fils, vous portez enfin la peine des foiblesses de vostre monde. Il y a du vulgaire icy comme là qui ne peut souffrir la pensée des choses ou il n'est point accoustumé. Mais scachez qu'on ne vous traite qu' a la pareille ; et que si quelqu' un de cette terre avoit monté dans la vostre, avec la hardiesse de se dire homme, vos sçavans le feroient estouffer comme un monstre. Il me promit en suite qu'il advertiroit la Cour de mon desastre."

This friendly personage alike disclaimed a terrestrial and lunar origin ; he informs Bergerac that originally he had been a native of the sun, which, being overstocked with inhabitants, occasionally sent out colonies to the neighbouring pla-

nets. He had, it seems, been commissioned to our earth, and in his youth had been known in Greece as the demon of Socrates. In Rome he had addicted himself to Brutus, but had at length preferred a lunar to a terrestrial residence, for which he assigns various reasons :—" C'est que les hommes y sont amateurs de la verité, qu'on n'y voit point de Pedans, que les Philosophes ne se laissent persuader qu'à la raison, et que l'autorité d'un sçavant, ny le plus grand nombre, ne l'emportent point sur l'opinion d'un bateur en grange, quand il raisonne aussi fortement. Bref en ce pais on ne conte pour insenséz que les Sophistes et les Orateurs. Je luy demanday combien de temps ils vivoient ; il me repondit trois ou quatre mille ans."

With this solar being, Bergerac enters into philosophical conversation, and several very sublime discussions ensue, which are fortunately interrupted by his friend the exhibiter. " Il en estoit là de son discours, quand mon basteleur s'apperceut que la chambrée commençoit a s'ennuyer de mon jargon qu'ils n'entendoient point, et qu'ils prenoient pour un grongnement non articulé : il se remit de plus belle a tirer ma corde pour me faire sauter jusque a ce que les spectateurs etant saouls de rire, et d'asseurer que j'avois presque autant d'esprit.

que les bestes de leur pais, ils se retirèrent chacun chez soy."

The chief inconvenience felt by Cyrano, during the first period of his lunar residence, was the want of provisions, for the inhabitants of the moon live by the odour of savoury viands; a mode of subsistence also attributed to them in the True History of Lucian, which evinces our author's imitation of the works of the Grecian satirist. Cyrano, however, at last succeeds in making them understand, that something more substantial than the mere steam or exhalations of feasts was necessary for his subsistence.

At length Cyrano was conducted to court by the friendly demon, where, after much reasoning, it was concluded that he was the female of the queen's little animal, who, in consequence was ordered to be introduced to him. Accordingly, in the midst of a procession of monkeys in full dress, a little man arrived. "Il m'aborda," says Bergerac, "par un *Criado de vouestra merced*; Je luy riposté sa reverence a peu pres en mesme termes."

This gentleman was Dominico Gonzales, the Castilian, who had travelled thither with the Ganzars; and this circumstance, by the way, is a proof that the work of Gonzales was the prototype of that of Cyrano, as his was evidently of Gulliver's voyage

to Brobdignag. Dominico had immediately on his arrival been classed in the category of monkeys, as he happened to be clothed in the Spanish mode, which the inhabitants of the moon had fixed on for the fashionable attire of their monkeys, as the most ridiculous, which, after long meditation, they had found it possible to devise. Cyrano being considered by the lunar sages as the female of the same class of monkeys of which Dominico was the male, they were confined together, and have long and pretty tiresome discourses concerning elementary principles, the possibility of a vacuum, and other investigations, which were fashionable subjects of discussion among philosophical enquirers in the days of Bergerac. "Voilà," says he, "les choses a peu pres dont nous amusions le temps : car ce petit Espagnol avoit l'esprit joly. Nostre entretien toute fois n'estoit que la nuit, a cause que depuis six heures du matin jusques au soir, la grande foule du monde qui nous venoit contempler a nostre logis nous eust destourné ; Car quelques-un nous jettoient des pierres, d'autres des noix, d'autres de l'herbe : Il n'estoit bruit que des bestes du Roy, on nous servoit tous les jours a manger a nos heures, et le Roy et la reine prenoient eux-mesmes assez sou-

vent la peine de me taster le ventre pour connoître si Je n' emplissois point, car ils bruloient d' une envie extraordinaire d' avoir de la race de ces petits animaux. Je ne sçais si ce fut pour avoir esté plus attentif que mon masle a leurs simagrées et a leurs tons, mais J' appris plustost que luy a entendre leur langue, et a l'escorcher un peu."

The circumstance of Cyrano acquiring some knowledge of the language of the country, instead of being favourable to him, exposed him to inconvenience and persecution, as some free-thinkers began to allege that he was endued with reason. This was most furiously opposed by the more orthodox and accredited sages, who maintained that it was not only foolish, but a most horrid impiety, to suppose that a creature which did not walk on all fours, could be possessed of any species of mental intelligence. " Nous autres," argued they, " marchons a quatre pieds, parce que Dieu ne se voulut pas fier d' une chose si precieuse a une moine ferme assiette, et il eut peur qu' allant autrement il n' arrivast malheur a l' homme, c'est pourquoy il prit la peine de l' asseoir sur quatre piliers, afin qu' il ne pût tomber : mais dedaignant de se mesler de la construction de ces deux brutes, il les abandonna au caprice de la Nature, laquelle ne

craignant pas la perte de si peu de chose, ne les appuya que sur deux pattes."

But the principal argument against the rationality of Cyrano and his male, and on which the lunar sages particularly piqued themselves, was, that these animals possessed the *Os Sublime*, which the sages of our earth, in their discussions against quadrupeds, rightly consider as a pledge of immortality: "Voyez un peu outre cela," continued the lunar philosophers, "comment ils (Cyrano and the Spaniard) ont la teste tournée devers le Ciel: C'est la disette ou Dieu les a mis de toutes choses, qui l' a scitué de la sorte, car cette posture supliante temoigne qu' ils se plaignent au ciel de celui qui les a creez, et qu' ils luy demandent permission de s' accommoder de nos restes. Mais nous autres nous avons la teste panchée en bas pour contempler les biens dont nous sommes seigneurs, et comme n' y ayant rien au ciel a qui notre heureuse condition puisse porter envie."

The result of the philosophical conferences concerning Cyrano was, that he must be a bird,—a discovery on which the sages greatly plumed themselves; he was accordingly inclosed in a cage, and intrusted to the queen's fowler,\* who employed himself in teaching his charge as we do linnets. Under this person's auspices, the pro-

gress of Cyrano was such, that the disputes concerning his rationality were renewed, and the consequence was, that those sages who defended the orthodox side of the question, having considerably the worse of the argument, were obliged—  
“ de faire publier un Arrest par lequel on devoit de croire que J' eusse de la raison, avec un commandement tres-expres a toutes personnes de quelque qualité qu' elles fussent, de s' imaginer, quoy que Je pusse faire de spirituel, que c' estoit l' instinct qui me le faisoit faire.”

To those who are acquainted with the history of philosophy, and the state of opinions in the days of Bergerac, there will appear considerable merit in the satire which has just been exhibited. The supporters of the systems of Aristotle had at one time (ridiculous as it may seem) procured an *Arret* at Paris, to prevent his doctrines being contested; and some of his admirers, enraged at the shock which Descartes, Gassendi, and other philosophers in France at this time gave to his opinions, were desirous of resorting to a similar expedient.

In spite, however, of the Lunar *Arret*, the controversy grew so warm, that, as a last resource, Cyrano was ordered to appear before an assembly of the states, in order to judge of his rational

powers. The examiners interrogated him on some points of philosophy, and refuted the opinions which he expressed in his answers, “ de sorte que n’ y pouvant repondre, J’ alleguay pour dernier refuge les principes d’ Aristote, qui ne me servirent pas davantage que les Sophismes, car en deux mots ils m’ en decouvrirent la fausseté. Cet Aristote me dirent ils, dont vous vantez si fort la science, accommodoit sans doute les principes a sa Philosophie, au lieu d’ accomoder sa Philosophie aux principes. Enfin comme ils virent que Je ne leur clabaudois autre chose, sinon qu’ ils n’ estoient pas plus sçavans qu’ Aristote, et qu’ on m’ avoit defendu de disputer contre ceux qui nioient les principes ; ils conclurent tous d’ une commune voix, que Je n’ estois pas un homme, mais possible quelque espece d’ Austruche, si bien qu’ on ordonna a l’ Oyseleur de me reporter en cage. J’ y passois mon temps avec assez de plaisir, car a cause de leur langue que Je possedois correctement, toute la cour se divertissoit a me faire jaser. Les Filles de la Reine entr’ autres fouroient toujours quelque bribe dans mon panier ; et la plus gentille de toutes ayant conceu quelque amitié pour moy, elle estoit si transportée de joye, lorsqu’ estant en secret, Je l’ entretenois des moeurs



et des divertissemens des gens de nostre Monde, et principalement de nos cloches, et de nos autres instruments de musique, qu' elle me protestoit les larmes aux yeux que si jamais Je me trouvois en estat de revoler en nostre Monde, elle me suivroit de bon cocur."

This lady continues to manifest much attachment to Cyrano, and her affection reminds us of the love of the fair Glumdalclitch for Gulliver in Brobdignag.

At length, his friend, the demon of Socrates, procures the deliverance of Cyrano, who now narrowly escapes being condemned to death for impiety, in maintaining that our earth was not merely a moon, but an inhabited world. This had been oppugned with so much zeal, and so many good arguments by the sages, that Cyrano, in revenge, asserted that he had come to opine that their earth was not an earth but a moon.—" Mais me dirent-ils tous, vous y voyez de la terre, des rivières, des mers, que seroit-ce donc tout cela ? N'importe, repartis Je, Aristote assure que ce n'est que la Lune ; et si vous aviez dit le contraire dans les classes ou J' ay fait mes études, on vous auroit sifflé. Il se fit sur cela un grand éclat de rire, il ne faut pas demander si ce fut de leur ignorance :

Mais cependant on me conduisit dans ma cage." In fine, previous to his deliverance from this second confinement, Cyrano was obliged to make an *Amende*, and to proclaim publicly in the principal parts of the city,—“Peuplé, Je vous declare que cette Lune-cy n'est pas une Lune, mais un Monde, et que ce Monde de la bas n'est pas un Monde, mais une Lune. Tel est ce que le Conseil trouve bon que vous croyez.”

After the deliverance of Bergerac, we are presented with a number of philosophical disquisitions which he held with the demon and his friends. Among other topics, the arrival of a person of quality, decked out in a particular manner, gives rise to a discussion, which has been seized upon by Sterne:—“Cette coustume me semble bien extraordinaire, repartis-Je, car en nostre monde la marque de noblesse est de porter une Espée. Mais l' Hoste sans s'emouvoir : O mon petit homme, s' ecria-t' il, quoy les grands de vostre monde sont si enragez de fair parade d'un instrument qui designe un boureau, et qui n'est forgé que pour nous detruire, enfin l' ennemy juré de tout ce qui vit ; et de cacher au contraire ce sans qui nous serions au rang de ce qui n'est pas, le Promethée de chaque animal, et le reparateur infatigable des foiblesses de la nature. Malheureuse contrée, où

les marques de generation sont ignominieuses, et ou celles d'aneantissement sont honorables."<sup>2</sup>

At length Cyrano, after performing a tour of the moon, is conducted from that luminary to earth, in the arms of the demon, who places him on the acclivity of a hill, and disappears. Some Italian peasants, whom he meets, cross themselves in great terror, but at length conduct him to a village. Here he is assailed by a prodigious barking of dogs, who, smelling the odour of the moon, against which they were accustomed to bark, keep up an incessant clamour. By walking a few days on a terrace in the sun, in order to purify himself of the smell, Cyrano forms a truce with his canine foes, visits Rome, and at length arrives at Marseilles.

Such is the abstract of the *Histoire Comique des Etats et Empire de la Lune*, a work which, like all

<sup>2</sup> This is probably intended as a satire on a passage in Charron's work *Sur La Sagesse*:—"Hélas on choisit les tenebres, on se cache, on ne se livre qu'à la derobée au plaisir de produire son semblable; au lieu qu'on le détruit en plein jour, en sonnant la trompette en remplissant l'air de fanfares! Il n'est pas honnête de s'entretenir de certaines choses tandis qu'on parle avec orgueil d'un sabre et d'un pique; et ce qui sert à tuer l'homme est une marque de noblesse—on dore on enrichit une épée, on s'en pare."

those of which the satire is in any degree temporary, has lost a good deal of its first relish. It is, however, still worthy of perusal, especially by those who are acquainted with the philosophical history of the period in which it was composed: And the interest which it excites must, to an English reader, be increased by its having served in many respects as a prototype to the most popular production of a writer so celebrated as Swift. Nor has it only directed the plan of the Dean of St Patrick's work; since even in the summary of the Lunar Voyage that has been presented, many points of resemblance will at once be discerned to the journey to Brobdingnag. Gulliver is beset, at his first landing on that strange country, by a number of the inhabitants, who are of similar dimensions with the people of the moon, and who are astonished at his diminutive stature—he is exhibited as a sight at one of the principal towns—he amuses the spectators with various mountebank tricks—and acquires an imperfect knowledge of the language—afterwards he is carried to court, where he is introduced to the queen's favourite dwarf, and where great disputes arise concerning the species to which he belongs, among the chief scholars, whose speculations are ridiculed in a manner extremely similar to the reasonings of the lunar

sages. The general turn of wit and humour is besides the same, and seems to be of a description almost peculiar to these two writers. The Frenchman, indeed, wanted the advantages of learning and education possessed by his successor, and hence his imagination was, perhaps, less guarded and correct; in many respects, however, it is more agreeably extravagant, and his aërial excursion is free from what is universally known to be the chief objections to the satire contained in the four voyages of Gulliver.

As Cyrano's Journey to the Moon is the origin of Swift's Brobdignag, so the *Histoire des Etats du Soleil* seems to have suggested the plan of the Voyage to Laputa. This second expedition of Cyrano is much inferior in merit to his former one, but, like the third excursion of Gulliver, is in a great measure intended to expose the vain pursuits of schemers and projectors in learning and science.

From an imitation, probably of the works of Bergerac, many of the *Voyages Imaginaires*, which appeared in France during the first half of the 18th century, described excursions through the heavenly bodies. *Les Voyages de Milord Ceton*, by Marie Anne de Roumier, is the account of an English nobleman, who, during the disturbances

of his own country in the time of Cromwell, is metamorphosed into a fly, and in that shape is carried by a friendly genius through the moon and seven planets. The author accommodates the character of the inhabitants of each star to the name it bears on earth. Venus is the centre of amatory indulgence, and Mercury the abode of avarice and fraud. By this means there is conveyed a general satire on different vices ; and a ridicule of individuals addicted to the predominant passion in the planet seems also to have been occasionally intended.

There are also some imaginary expeditions through the interior of the earth, the most celebrated of which, next to the *Mundus Subterraneus* of Kircher, is the *Lamekis* of the Chevalier Mouhy, which comprehends an account of the sectaries of Serapis, who retired from the rest of the world to the centre of the globe, that, in this seclusion, they might celebrate their mysteries in uninterrupted tranquillity. The work is much in the style of an oriental tale ; it is full of marvels, and displays much richness of imagination.

Connected with these wonderful expeditions, there is a species of allegorical travels into imaginary countries, feigned to be the particular residence of some peculiar passion or folly. Of this

sort is the *Voyage de l' Isle d' Amour, Du Royaume de Coqueterie, &c.* The best work of the kind I have seen, is *Le Voyage de Prince Fan-feredin dans la Romancie*. It is the description of an ideal kingdom, filled with chimerical productions, and peopled with inhabitants, of whimsical or factitious manners, and is on the whole an excellent criticism on the improbable scenes and unnatural manners with which so many writers of romance have stuffed their productions. Thus, some rocks which Fan-feredin passes on his journey, are represented as soft as velvet, having been melted the day before by the complaints of a lover. A great part of the satire is directed against the *Cleveland* and *Memoires d'un Homme de Qualité*, by the Abbé Prevot. It was written by the Jesuit Guillaume Bougeant, who died in 1743, and who was distinguished by various historical and satiric compositions.

To the above-mentioned classes of *Voyages Imaginaires*, may be associated works resembling the *Sentimental Journey*, where the country is real, but the incidents of the journey imaginary. The earliest and most esteemed of these productions is the *Voyage de Chapelle*, where a journey is performed through different provinces of France. This work, which was written about the middle of

the 17th century, served as the model of Fontaine's *Voyage de Paris en Limousin*, the *Voyage de Languedoc*, and a number of similar compositions, many of which, like their model, are partly written in prose, and partly in verse.

The class of *Songes et Visions* resembles the *Voyages Imaginaires*, and only differs from them in this, that the body is in repose while the mind ranges through the whole chimerical world. These productions are of a more fugitive nature, as their duration is limited, than the *Voyages Imaginaires*, but they are also less unnatural, since nothing is too extravagant to be presented to the imagination, when the eye of reason is closed with that of the body. Of this species of writing, some beautiful examples have been transmitted by antiquity. In modern times, the earliest is the *Laberinto d'Amore* of the celebrated Boccaccio, which was the model of similar French compositions.

This production was followed by the *Polifilo*, or *Hypernotomachia*, written in Italian in 1467 by Francesco Colonna, who, being a priest, is said to have thus allegorically described his passion for a nun called Lucretia Maura. In this vision *Polifilo* is a lover, who imagines himself conducted in a dream by his mistress *Polia* through the temples, tombs, and antiquities of Greece and Egypt. They



are at length carried in a bark by Cupid to the island of Cythera, which is beautifully described, and there behold the festivals of Venus and commemoration of Adonis: the Nymphs prevail on Polia to relate her story, and when it is concluded Polifilo is awakened by the song of the nightingale. This work is full of mysteries, of which Polia is the interpreter, but the mysteries are not always the clearer for her interpretation.

The *Hypernotomachia* was translated into French at an early period, under the title of *Songe de Poliphile*, and was probably the model of similar compositions, which became very prevalent in France during the period on which we are now engaged.

In *Les Songes d'un Hermite*, the different states of society and occupations of individuals pass in review before a recluse, and he finds nothing in them all to induce him to quit his solitude.

In *Les Songes et Visions Philosophiques de Mercier*, the author feigns, that while returning from the country to Paris, he arrived at a small inn. Here he met an interesting woman, who had made an unfortunate love marriage. While relating her story, she is surprised and delighted by the arrival of her husband, whom she had regarded as lost. The story the author had heard, and

the scene he had witnessed, lead him to ruminate on the sorrows and pleasures of love, which form the subject of his first dream, as the impressions that had been made continued after he dropped asleep. Nature holds up to him a mirror, in which he sees represented the effects and influence of that passion in different states of society, the impulse it gives to the savage, and the tameness of domestic happiness in civilized society, to which the author seems to prefer the gratifications of the Indian. His second vision relates to war, and is raised by a perusal of the celebrated treatise of Grotius. The dreamer is carried to a valley, where Justice comes to decide on the fate of conquerors and heroes. Here the shades of Alexander, Tamerlane, and other warriors, pass before him, and are judged according to their deserts.

The Romans Cabalistiques form the last species of this division of fiction, which it will be necessary to mention. For many ages the mysteries of the Cabalistic philosophy were subjects of belief and investigation in France. The ends at which its votaries aimed, were the transmutation of metals, and the composition of the Elixir of life, supposed to be the quintessence of the four elements, which, according to this fantastic creed, were inhabited or governed by Sylphs, Undinas, Gnomes,

and Salamanders. The vain researches of the cabalists, however, produced some discoveries in experimental physics, and the more ornamental part of their system has suggested the machinery of the most elegant poem in our language.

About the middle of the seventeenth century, when the partizans of this philosophy were hardly yet laughed out of countenance, the Abbé Villars undertook to expose its absurdities in a satire entitled *Le Comte de Gabalis, ou Entretiens sur les sciences secretes*, a work which was very popular in France, and perhaps instrumental in discrediting the reveries which it ridiculed. Its author feigns that he was acquainted with a number of philosophers who prosecuted the study of the occult sciences, and was employed to correspond in their name with the Count Gabalis, a celebrated German adept, who was expected in a short time to visit Paris. The count is much prepossessed in his favour by the letters he received, and, on coming to Paris, immediately waits on his correspondent, whom he finds endued with such excellent dispositions for the reception of his doctrines, that he resolves to develop to him the whole Arcana of the Rosicrucian science. Previous, however, to this initiation, he enjoins, as requisite to the successful prosecution of his studies, a re-

nunciation, which, if really as essential as the adept describes, satisfactorily accounts for the little progress that has been made in the Cabalistic arts. As a compensation, the disciple is promised the most familiar acquaintance with the elementary spirits, and he of course feels deeply interested concerning their attributes. This introduces the ensuing conversations, which relate to sylphs, undinas, &c., and the nature of their intercourse with the children of men. The whole system of Sylphs and Gnomes had been originally unfolded by Paracelsus. But the Abbé Villars has chiefly followed *La Chiave del Gabinetto*, a work attributed to the ~~author~~ Giuseppe Francisco Borri, a Milanese impostor, who, being forced to leave his own country on account of his dissolute life and heretical opinions, travelled through Europe, imposing on the credulous by a pretended knowledge of cabalistic secrets. During his life a series of letters were printed, under title of *Chiave del Gabinetto*, which were pretended to have been written by Borri, but which, in fact, only contain a record of his supposed secrets and opinions. The two first letters give an account of a conversation held between Borri and a Danish cabalist with regard to elementary beings. The others disclose

the secrets concerning transmutation of metals, the perpetual mobile, &c.

The Comte Gabalis was followed by a number of tales relating to elementary beings. In *Les Ondins*, a princess escapes from the power of a magician, by whom she is persecuted. She arrives at the sea-shore, and in a fit of despair at her forlorn situation, plunges into the deep, where she is hospitably received by the undinas, whose palace and empire are magnificently described.

*L'Amant Salamandre* is the story of an interested governess, who, in order to procure an establishment for a son, resolves to bring her pupil, a young lady of beauty and fortune, into a situation which will compel her to form this unequal alliance. With this view she leads her to despise the human species, and to sigh for beings of a superior order, as alone worthy of her virtues and accomplishments. Her thoughts are thus turned towards an intercourse with elementary spirits, and her ruin is finally completed by the introduction of the young man, invested with the imposing attributes of a salamander.

*Les Lutins de Chateau de Kernosy* is the work of Madame Murat, so well known by her fairy tales. The enchantments here, also, are fictitious, and performed by pretended magicians in order to

accomplish their purpose. Two lovers, with the view of facilitating their introduction into a castle inhabited by their mistresses, contrive to pass for elementary spirits, deceive the vigilance of a severe and antiquated ducna, and get rid of their rivals, who are two awkward and credulous rustics.

Herodotus, the father of history, tells us of men who at particular seasons changed themselves into wolves, and we are informed in the 8th eclogue of Virgil that Mœris was often detected in this disguise. Solinus also mentions a people of Istria who possessed the same enviable privilege. The notion, doubtless, had its foundation in the imposition of pretended sorcerers, who laid claim to a power of effecting this transformation, and perhaps, to aid the deception, disguised themselves in wolves' skins. The belief, however, in this faculty left a name behind it in every country of Europe. He who enjoyed it was called Garwalf by the Normans, and Bisclaveret by the Bretons, which is the name of one of the Armorican lays of Marie. It contains the story of a baron, whose wife perceiving that her husband was invariably absent during three days of the week, interrogated him so closely on the cause of his periodical disappearance, that she at length reduced him to the mortifying acknowledgement that during one half

of the week he prowled as a bisclaveret; and she also extracted from him a secret, which enabled her to confirm his metamorphosis. From a passage in the *Origines Gauloises*, by La Tour d'Auvergne, it would appear that a belief in this species of transformation continued long in Britany.—“*Dans l'opinion des Bretons, ces memes hommes se revetent, pendant la nuit, de peaux de Loups, et en prennent quelquefois la forme, pour se trouver a des assembleés ou le demon est supposé presider. Ce que l'on dit ici des deguisements et des courses nocturnes de ces pretendus hommes loups, dont l'espece n'est pas encore entierement eteinte dans l'ancienne Armorique, nous rapelle ce que l'histoire rapporte des Lycantrophes d'Irlande.*” In Ireland, indeed, this superstition probably subsisted longer than in any other country. “*In some parts of France,*” says Sir William Temple in his *Miscellanea*, “*the common people once believed certainly there were Lougaroos, or men turned into wolves; and I remember several Irish of the same mind.*”

Under this name of *Loups-Garoux*, those persons who enjoyed this agreeable faculty have been introduced into several French tales, and other works of fiction, during the period on which we are now employed. These productions have been very

happily ridiculed in *L'Histoire des Imaginations* de M. Oufle, by the Abbé Bardelon. This work is partly written on the model of *Don Quixote*, and contains the story of a credulous and indolent man, who, having read nothing but marvellous tales, believes, at length, in the existence of sorcerers, demons, and *loups-garoux*. He first imagines that he is persecuted by a spirit, then alternately fancies himself a magician and *loup-garou*, and devotes his time to the discovery of a mode of penetrating into the thoughts of men, and attracting the affections of women.



## CHAPTER XIV.

*Sketch of the Origin and Progress of the English Novel. — Serious. — Comic. — Romantic. — Conclusion.*

IT will have been remarked, that the account of the modern French tales and novels has been much less minute than the analysis of those fictitious histories by which they were preceded. To this compression of the subject, I have been led partly by the variety, and partly by the notoriety of the more recent productions. In the early periods of literature, works of fiction were rare, and thus it was comparatively easy to enumerate and describe them. But during last century, the number of fictitious writings, both in France and England, was so great, that as full an account of them as of those which appeared in former times, would occupy many volumes. Such analysis is likewise the less

necessary or proper, since, when works of fiction become so very numerous and varied, they cease to be characteristic of the age in which they were produced. In former periods, when readers were few, and when only one species of fiction appeared at a time, it was easy to judge what were the circumstances which gave birth to it, and to which it gave birth in turn. But in later times, not only an infinite number of works, but works of different kinds, have sprung up at once; and thus were no longer expressive of the taste and feelings of the period of their composition. Above all, what renders a minute analysis unnecessary is, that the works themselves are known to most readers, and, consequently, a detailed account of them would be altogether superfluous. Abstracts may be presented on occasions where the original is little known, and abounds in long details, but they are perfectly unsuitable and improper when the whole novel is concisely and elegantly composed. In this case the value of the original consists less in the story itself than in the style and sentiments and colouring—in short, in a variety of circumstances, which in an analysis or abridgement totally evaporate and disappear.

Such views have prevented me from entering into detail concerning the French, and they apply

still more forcibly to the English novel. What could be more insufferable than an analysis of Tom Jones, and how feeble would be the idea which it would convey of the original? Accordingly I shall confine myself to a very short and general survey of the works of English fiction.

We have already seen that, during the reigns of our Henrys and Edwards, the English nation was chiefly entertained with the fables of chivalry. The French romances concerning Arthur and his knights continued to be the most popular productions during the rule of the Plantagenet monarchs. In the time of Edward IV. the fictions of chivalry were represented in an English garb in the *Morte Arthure*, which is a compilation from the most celebrated French romances of the Round Table; while, at the same period, the romantic inventions concerning the history of Troy and classical heroes were translated and printed by the indefatigable Caxton. Artus de la Bretagne and Huon of Bourdeaux were *done* into English by Lord Berners in the reign of Henry VIII., and continued, along with the *Morte Arthure*, to be the chief delight of our ancestors during the sway of the family of Tudor. In the age of Queen Elizabeth, the Spanish romances concerning Amadis and Palmerin were translated, and a

few imitations of the romances of chivalry were also written in English. Of this class of fiction, the "Famous, delectable, and pleasaunt Hystorie of the renowned Parismus, Prince of Bohemia," may be regarded as a representative. This work, written by Emanuel Ford, and printed 1598, was so popular in its day, that the 13th edition, in black letter, is now before me. It is principally formed on the model of the Spanish romances, particularly on *Palmerin d' Oliva*.

The *Ornatus and Artesia*, also by Emanuel Ford, and the *Phcander, or Maiden Knight*, written by Henry Roberts, and printed in 1595, belong to the same class of composition. By this time, however, the genuine spirit of chivalry had evaporated, and these productions present but a female image of the doughty combats and daring adventures of Lancelot or Tristan. A new state of society and manners had sprung up, and hence the nation eagerly received those innumerable translations and imitations of the Italian tales, which, being now widely diffused by means of *Paynter's Palace of Pleasure*, *Whetstone's Heptameron*, and *Grimstone's Admirable Histories*, supplied to the higher class of English readers that species of entertainment which their ancestors had formerly derived from the *Recuyell of the Hystories* of

*Troye and the Legends of Arthur.* The exploits of chivalry—the atrocities and intrigues of the Italian tales, are now alike neglected; and while such works as those of Richardson and Fielding interpose between, they can scarcely be regarded by the present age or posterity. Yet it should not be forgotten that the images and characters of chivalry bestowed additional richness and variety on the luxuriant fancy of Spenser, while the incidents of the Italian tales supplied materials even for the inexhaustible imagination of Shakspeare, and gave birth to that peculiar turn of tragic as well as comic interest adopted by the most numerous and noble race of our dramatic poets.

While the English nation, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, were chiefly amused with the fading remains of romances of chivalry, and the earliest imitations of Italian tales, there was invented, during the same period, a new species of novel, written in a style of bad taste and affectation, to which there had hitherto been no parallel, and of which it is to be hoped there will never be an imitation. The first work of this description was the *Euphuës* of John Lylye, who was born in 1553 in the Wolds of Kent. At an early age he went to court, where he was patronized by Queen Elizabeth, and hoped to be preferred to the situ-

ation of Master of the Revels; but after an attendance of many years, he was finally disappointed. While at the English court he wrote his romance of *Euphues*, which some persons have erroneously imagined to be intended as a satire on the phraseology of the court ladies during the reign of Elizabeth. *Euphues*, however, seems perfectly a serious production, and its author had either the bad taste to adopt in composition the absurd style of conversation which was then in vogue, or, what is more probable, the popularity of his work introduced an affected jargon among the *Precieuses Ridicules* of the age, in the same manner as the romances of Mad. Scuderi brought the long and inflated compliments of her characters into fashion :—

*Deux nobles campagnards, grands lecteurs des Romans,  
M'ont dit tout Cyrus dans leurs longs complimens.*

BOILEAU.

The work of *Lylie*, which was published about 1580, is divided into two parts, of which the first is entitled *Euphues*, and the second *Euphues and his England*. In the beginning of this production we are told that *Euphues*, an Athenian gentleman, distinguished for the elegance of his person and beauty of his wit, his amorous temperament and

to find them." Philautus being thus disappointed, sends Camilla an amatory letter inclosed in a mulberry, which having failed to gain her love, he transmits a second, in which he threatens suicide, and subscribes himself—"Thine ever, though shortly never."

At this crisis Euphues is recalled by letters to Athens, whence he transmits to Italy, for use of the Neapolitan ladies, what he calls "Euphues' Glass for Europe," a flattering description of England, which he considers as the mirror in which other countries should dress themselves. This, of course, contains an encomiastic representation of the court—the beauty, talents, and, above all, the chastity of Queen Elizabeth, and the virtues of English-women, "who do not, like the Italian ladies, drink wine before they rise, to increase their colour." Philautus now reports by letter that he had married the lady Flavia, who, it will be recollected, was his third mistress. "Euphues then gave himself to solitariness, determining to sojourn in some uncouth place; and this order he left with his friends, that if any news came or letters, that they should direct them to the Mount of Selexsedra, where I leave him, either to his musing or muses."

In the romance of Euphues there are chiefly

three faults, which indeed pervade all the novels of the same school. 1. A constant antithesis, not merely in the ideas, but words, as one more given to *theft* than to *threft*. 2. An absurd affectation of learning, by constant reference to history and mythology. 3. A ridiculous superabundance of similitudes: Lylie is well characterized by Drayton, as always

Talking of stones, stars, planets, fishes, flies,  
Playing with words and idle similies.

Thus, in the very commencement of the work, the author, moralizing on the elegance and accomplishments of his hero, remarks, "that freshest colours soonest fade—the keenest razor soonest turns his edge—the finest cloth is soonest eaten with moths, and the cambrick sooner stained than the coarse canvas." The same style is preserved in the most impassioned letters and conversations in the work. Philautus, writing to Euphues, who had just deprived him of the affections of his mistress, compares his rival, in the course of a single page, to musk, the cedar tree, a swallow, bee, and spider; while perfect friendship is likened to the glow-worm, frankincense, and the damask rose. As a specimen of the



amorous dialect of the romance, Lucilla, after reminding her admirers that there are more dangers in love than hares in Athos, runs over all the examples of antiquity in which ladies had been deceived by strangers, as Dido, Ariadne, &c. "It is common and lamentable," she continues, "to behold simplicity entrapped in subtilty, and those that have most might to be infected with most malice. The spider weaveth the fine web to hang the fly—the wolfe weareth a faire face to devour the lamb—the merlin striketh at the partridge—the eagle snappeth at the fly \* \* \* \*. I have read that the bull being tied to the fig-tree loseth his strength—that the whole herd of deer stand at the gaze if they smell a sweet apple—that the dolphin by the sound of musick is brought to shore. And then no marvell it is if the wilde decre be caught with an apple, that the tame damosell is wonne with a blossom—if the fleet dolphin be allured with harmony, that women be entangled with the melody of mens speech."

Notwithstanding its bad taste and affectation, or perhaps in consequence of them, Euphues was in the highest vogue at the period of its composition, particularly among the court ladies, who had all the phrases by heart. Blount, the editor of six of Lylie's comedies, informs us that all the

ladies of that time were his scholars; she who spoke not Euphuism being as little regarded at court as if she could not speak French. Ben Jonson often makes his ladies quote Euphuës. Thus Pallace, in *Every Man out of his Humour*, (act v, scene x,) ‘O, Master Brisk, as ’tis said in Euphuës, Hard is the choice, when one is compelled either by silence to die with grief, or by speaking to live with shame.”

Unfortunately, Lylie had not merely admirers, but, as was naturally to be expected from his popularity, many imitators. Of these, one of the earliest was Lodge, author of *Rosalynd, or Euphuës’ Golden Legacy*, a production printed in 1590, and chiefly curious as being the origin of one of Shakspeare’s most celebrated dramas. Part of Lodge’s novel was probably taken from the *Coke’s Tale of Gamelyn*, which was written by a contemporary of Chaucer, and has by some been erroneously attributed to that father of English poetry. Gamelyn, the younger son of Sir Johan de Boundis, was deprived of his inheritance and scurvily treated by his elder brother, who, among other things, persuaded him to wrestle with a doughty champion, hoping that he would be destroyed in the combat. In all his misfortunes Ga-

melyn received much commiseration from *Adam*, the old steward of his deceased father, by whose assistance he at length escaped from the cruelty of his brother, and arrived, with his preserver, at a forest, where he sees a band of outlaws seated at a repast, and is conducted by them to their king. Lodge's *Rosalynd*, in its turn, has suggested almost the whole plot of *As You Like It*, in which Shakspeare has not merely borrowed the story, but sketched several of the principal characters, and copied several speeches and expressions from the novel. The phrase "weeping tears," used by the clown, (act ii, scene iv,) and the whole description given by Oliver (act iv, scene iii,) of Orlando discovering him in the forest while in danger from the lion and serpent, is copied from Lodge's *Rosalynd*. A song in the second scene of the fourth act, beginning

What shall he have that killed the deer?—  
His leather skin and horns to wear, &c.

is from a passage in Lodge :—"What newes, forrester? hast thou wounded some deere and lost him in the fall? Care not, man, for so small a loss—thy fee was but the skinne and the hornes." Lodge's work also contains verses which indicate

some poetical taste and feeling, and which have not been neglected by Shakspeare in the poetry and songs with which he has interspersed his delightful drama. The characters, however, of the Clown and Audrey are of his own invention, as also that of Jaques, who fills the back-ground of the scene with a gloomy sensibility, like the *Pal-lida Mors* in the festive odes of Horace. The catastrophe of the piece is also considerably altered. Shakspeare, as is remarked by his commentators, appears to have been in great haste to conclude *As You Like it*. In Lodge, the elder brother is instrumental in saving Aliena from a band of ruffians, "who thought to steal her away, and to give her to the king for a present, hoping by such gifts to purchase all their pardons." Without the intervention of this circumstance, the passion of Celia (under name of Aliena) appears to be very hasty. It was conceived for a person of unamiable disposition; of whose reformation she had just heard, and whom she had only known at her father's court as remarkable for a churlish disposition, and his illiberal treatment of a younger brother. Finally, in Lodge's novel the usurping Duke is not diverted from his purpose by the pious counsels of a hermit, but is subdued and killed by the twelve peers of France, who were

brought by the third brother of Rosader to assist him in the recovery of his right. This incident, of course, could not have been well introduced into a drama; but even in that which Shakspeare has adopted in its place, he has suppressed, while hurrying to a conclusion, the dialogue between the usurper and hermit, "and thus lost," as Dr Johnson has remarked, "an opportunity of exhibiting a moral lesson, in which he might have found matter worthy of his highest powers. He has also forgot old Adám, the servant of Sir Rowland de Boyes, whose fidelity should have entitled him to some notice and reward, and whom Lodge, at the conclusion of his novel, makes captain of the king's guard."

Shakspeare has likewise been indebted for the plot of his *Winter's Tale* to another novel of the same school—*The Pleasant History of Dorastus and Fawnia*, by R. Greene, an author equally remarkable for his genius and profligacy. It was at one time supposed that the novel was founded on the play, but Dr Farmer discovered a copy of *Dorastus and Fawnia* printed in 1588, which was previous to the composition of the *Winter's Tale*. Our great dramatist, however, has changed all the names. His *Leontes*, king of Sicily, is called *Egistus* in the novel; *Polyxenes*, king of Bohe-

mia, is there named Pandosto ; Mamillius, prince of Sicily, Garinter ; and Hermione, Bellaria : Florizel is Greene's Dorastus, and Perdita his Fawnia. Shakspeare has also added the characters of Antigonus, Paulina, and Autolycus. In the principal part of the plot he has servilely followed the novel. The oracle, in the second scene of the third act, is copied from it, and in various passages he has merely versified its language. Thus the lines,

The gods themselves,  
Humbling their deities to love, have taken  
The shapes of beasts upon them : Jupiter  
Became a bull, and bellowed ; the green Neptune,  
A ram, and bleated ; and the fire-robed god,  
Golden Apollo, a poor humble swain,  
As I am now,—

are from the following passage in Dorastus and Fawnia :—" And yet, Dorastus, shame not the shepherd's weed—The heavenly gods have sometimes earthly thoughts ; Neptune became a ram, Jupiter a bull, Apollo a shepherd : *They* gods, and yet in love—*Thou* a man, appointed to love." By his adherence to the novel, the poet has also been led into the grossest geographical blunders, as making Bohemia a maritime country, sending

ambassadors to the isle of Delphos, &c. He has likewise been betrayed into such improbabilities and breach of the dramatic rules, as could only be atoned for by his skilful delineation of character, and that wild simplicity which pervades the sentiments and language.

Greene is also author of a romance called *Arcadia*, published in 1587, and formed on the model of Sidney's celebrated pastoral, which, though it was not printed till some years after the publication of Greene's *Arcadia*, had been written a considerable time before it.

The most beautiful, however, and best known of Greene's productions, is his *Philomela*, otherwise called *Lady Fitzwater's Nightingale*, in honour of the Lady Fitzwater, to whom it is addressed; "being penned," as the author says in the dedication, "to approve women's chastity." This beautiful tale has been lately reprinted in the first number of the *Archaica*, and is sufficient, as the editor remarks, to rescue the author's memory from the shame of a *constant* prostitution of his talents to immoral purposes. The character of *Philomela* is so exquisitely drawn, with so many attractions of saint-like purity, that the fancy which portrayed it, must have been at times illumined by the most tender and sublime concep-

tions. The style is indeed deformed by the affectations of Euphuism, but, in the conduct of the story, there is a selection of circumstances which anticipates the skill of a later period, and which is the more remarkable, when contrasted with the prolixity of Sidney's *Arcadia*, a work enjoying in that age the highest reputation.

Philomela, the heroine of this tale, was the wife of a Venetian nobleman, Count Philipppo Medici, and formed the wonder of that city, "not for her beauty, though Italy afforded none so fair—not for her dowry, though she were the only daughter of the duke of Milan, but for the admirable honours of her mind, which were so many and matchless, that Virtue seemed to have planted there the paradise of her perfection." Though the veil which this lady "used for her face was the covert of her own house—though she never would go abroad but in company of her husband, and then with such bashfulness, that she seemed to hold herself faulty in stepping beyond the shadow of her own mansion;" nevertheless, the unreasonable count "tormented her more with jealousy than recompensed her with affection, feeding upon that passion that gnaweth like envy upon her own flesh." In this frame of mind he be-  
thought himself who of his guests had "most



courteous entertainment at her hand." It is true, he was unable to call to his recollection any impropriety of conduct, or even levity of behaviour ; but then he remembered " that every outward appearance is not an authentional instance, that the greener the Alisander leaves be, the more bitter is the sap, and the salamander is the most warm when he lieth furthest from the fire ;" from all which he drew the inference, " that women are most heart-hollow when they are most lip-holy."

This unfortunate recollection concerning the colour of Alisander leaves, and the very peculiar properties of the salamander, together with other similitudes equally conclusive, drawn from stars and eagles and astronomers' almanacks, induced the count to employ an intimate friend, called Giovanni Lutesio, the most fine and courtly gentleman of Venice, to " make experience of his wife's honesty ;" Lutesio promising the husband, that, if he found her pliant to listen to his passion, he would make it manifest to him without dissembling.

Lutesio accordingly began to lay his baits, and one day, when he found Philomela sitting alone in her garden, singing to her lute many merry ditties, he embraced an opportunity of informing her that he was in love, but without revealing who was the

object of his passion. On this occasion Philomela propounded so many moral maxims, illustrated by apposite examples drawn from mythology and Roman history, and said so many fine things about ravens and musked Angelica, that he did not venture to proceed farther, but went to inform his friend of the modesty of his wife, and to rehearse the “cooling card of good counsel ;” which he had received from her prudence.

The husband, however, was not satisfied ; he attributed the legend of good lessons she had uttered, to his friend having refrained from professing a passion for herself, and therefore persuaded him to declare a love which he did not feel. Lutesio accordingly sent her a letter to that purpose, accompanied by a bad sonnet. Philomela returned an indignant answer, but also replied to the sonnet, to “show that her wit was equal to her virtue.”

All this was reported to the husband, who now began to entertain suspicions of Lutesio, and to fear, that “Men cannot dally with fire, nor sport with affection, and that he who had been a suitor in jest might be a speeder in earnest.” At length his suspicions were so confirmed by trifles light as air, that he entertained no doubt of the infide-

lity of his wife, but as he had no proof, he suborned two of his slaves to testify her guilt. The courts of justice accordingly pronounced a sentence of divorce, and banished both Lutesio and Philomela from the Venetian territory.

Philomela sailed for Palermo. During the voyage the shipmaster became enamoured of her beauty, "but his passion was so quailed by the rareness of her qualities, that he rather endeavoured to reverence her as a saint, than to love her as a paramour." On her arrival at Palermo, she resided with him and his wife, and found in their humble dwelling that "quiet rested in low thoughts, and the safest content in the poorest cottages; that the highest trees abide the sharpest storms, and the greatest personages the sorest frowns of fortune: therefore with patience she brooked her homely course of life, and had more quiet sleeps than in her palace in Venice; only her discontent was when she thought on Philipppo, that he had proved so unkind, and on Lutesio, that for her sake he was so deeply injured: Yet, as well as she might, she salved these sores, and covered her hard fortunes with the shadow of her innocence."

Meanwhile Lutesio had fled to the duke of Mi-

lan, the father of Philomela, and informed him of the injuries inflicted on his daughter. The duke immediately proceeded to Venice, and sought reparation from the senate. Those slaves who had been suborned by the count, confessed their perjury. Then the count, conscience-stricken, rose up and declared, " that there is nothing so secret but the date of days will reveal ; that as oil, though it be moist, quencheth not fire, so time, though ever so long, is no sure covert for sin ; but as a spark raked up in cinders will at last begin to glow and manifest a flame, so treachery hidden in silence will burst forth and cry for revenge."

" Whatsoever villainy," continued he, " the heart doth work, in process of time the worm of conscience will bewray. It booteth little by circumstance to discover the sorrow I conceive, or little need I show my wife's innocence, when these slaves whom I suborned to perjure themselves, have proclaimed her chastity and my dishonour : suffice it then that I repent, though too late, and would make amends ; but I have sinned beyond satisfaction, for there is no sufficient recompense for unjust slander. Therefore, in penalty of my perjury towards Philomela, I crave myself justice against myself, that you would enjoin a penance, but no less than the extremity of death."

The life of Philipppo, however, was spared by the clemency of the duke, and all set out in different directions in quest of the injured Philomela. The husband arrived at Palermo, and in despair accused himself of a murder which had been committed in an obscure corner of the city. Philomela hearing that a Venetian was thrown into prison, asked to see him, and perceived through the lattice that he was indeed her husband ; and, about the same time, she learned that her innocence had been established at Venice. Her first emotions were those of indignation and hopes of revenge, but soon she reminded herself " that the word husband is a high term, easily pronounced in the mouth, but never to be banished from the heart—knowest thou not that the love of a wife must not end but by death ? that the term of marriage is dated in the grave ?" She then framed to herself an excuse for the conduct of her husband, " that he did not work this wrong because he loved another, but because he overloved thee : 'Twas jealousy that forced him to that folly, and suspicion is incident only to such as are kind-hearted lovers."

Under the influence of these sentiments she appeared in court, when her husband was arraigned and accused herself of the murder. In the

course of the trial, the innocence of both was made manifest. The judge enquired why these two did plead themselves guilty ; Philippo answered for despair, as weary of his life—Philomela said for the safety of her husband.

“ The Sicilians at this shouted at her wondrous virtues, and Philippo, in a swoon between grief and joy, was carried away half dead to his lodging, where he had not lain two hours, but, in an extasy, he ended his life. And Philomela hearing of the death of her husband, fell into extreme passions. She returned home to Venice, and there lived the desolate widow of Philippo Medici all her life ; which constant chastity made her so famous, that in her life she was honoured as the paragon of virtue, and after her death solemnly, and with wonderful honour, intombed in St Mark’s church, and her fame holden canonized until this day in Venice.”

The concluding incident of the story of Philomela is evidently an awkward alteration of Boccaccio’s celebrated story of Titus and Gesippus, (see above, vol. ii. p. 345.) The first part, which relates to the trial of the wife by the husband’s friend, corresponds, as has doubtless been remarked, with the episode of the *Curioso Impertinente*, in Don Quixote, where Anselmo persuades his

friend to try the chastity of his wife Camilla. It is not probable, however, that Greene and Cervantes copied from each other; Greene was dead before *Don Quixote* was published, and it is not likely that Cervantes had any opportunity of perusing *Philomela*. They must therefore have borrowed from some common original. Indeed, I remember to have once read the story in some old Italian novelist, but cannot now recall it more precisely to my recollection. *Philomela* is the origin of Davenport's play of the *City Night-cap*, where Lorenzo makes his friend Philipppo try the chastity of his wife, *Abstemia*, sister to the duke of Venice. This drama was written early in the 17th century, and has been published in Dodsley's collection; but the editor is mistaken in supposing that it is borrowed from the *Curioso Impertinente*, as the plot coincides much more closely with *Philomela*. Lorenzo bribes two slaves to swear to his wife's infidelity. The duke of Venice comes to seek reparation for the wrongs of *Abstemia*, who had meanwhile retired to Milan, where all that takes place corresponds precisely with what occurs at Palermo in *Philomela*. The style, too, is full of Euphuism, and even the words of Greene are sometimes adopted:—

O when the Elisander leaf looks green,  
The sap is then most bitter. An approved appearance  
Is no authentic instance : She that is lip-holy  
Is many times heart-hollow. —

Lodge and Greene are the only imitators of Lylie, who have atoned for affectation of style by any felicity of genius or invention : and I certainly do not mean to detain the reader with the Euphuism of Philotimus, by Brian Melbrank, published 1583, or Breton's Miseries of Mavillia, merely because they were printed in black letter, and are as scarce as they deserve to be.

The style of novel-writing introduced by Lylie, was not of long popularity, but the taste by which it was succeeded is not more deserving of commendation. During the agitated reign of Charles I., and the subsistence of the commonwealth, the English nation were better employed than in the composition or perusal of romances. By the time of the Restoration, the popularity of the Arcadia, which had been published in the reign of James I., and prevalence of the French heroic romance, fostered a taste for more ponderous compositions than any that had hitherto appeared. The Eliana, printed in 1661, is as remarkable for its affectation, though of a different species, as the novels



of the school of Euphues. In *Eliana*, when a person dies, he is said to depart into the subterranean walks of the Stygian grove—to see is always called to invisage, to raise is to suscite, and a ladder of ropes is termed a funal ladder. Flora “spreads her fragrant mantle on the superficies of the earth, and bespangles the verdant grass with her beauteous adornments;” and a lover “enters a grove free from the frequentations of any besides the ranging beasts and pleasing birds, whose dulcet notes exulscerate him out of his melancholy contemplations.”

The celebrated duchess of Newcastle employed herself in similar productions; but the only English romance of this description that obtained any notoriety, is the *Parthenissa* of Roger Boyle, earl of Orrery, which was published in 1664, and is much in the style of the French romance of the school of Calprenede and Scuderi. In the commencement of this work, a stranger, richly armed, and proportionally blest with all the gifts of nature and education, alights at the temple of *Hierapolis* in Syria, where the queen of love had fixed an oracle as famous as the deity to whom it was consecrated. A priest called *Callimachus*, who belonged to the establishment, accosted him, and,

without farther introduction or ceremony, begged a relation of the incidents of his life: the stranger agreed to furnish him with the notices required as a penance, but it is not clear whether he means on himself or Callimachus; one thing, however, is certain, that a penance is imposed on the reader. He prosecutes his story for some time without intermission, and then devolves it on a faithful attendant. It appears that the stranger is Artabanes, a Median prince, born and brought up at the court of the king of Parthia; and it is also unfolded that he is deeply enamoured of Parthenissa. This lady, who proves to be the heroine of the romance, had come, on occasion of the death of her father, to the Parthian court, to beg a continuance to herself of the revenues of a principality which he had enjoyed. Artabanes had soon an opportunity of evincing his passion; for on a great national festival, a procession, with a suitable accompaniment of trumpets and clarions, announced the approach of a character of importance. This stranger proved to be an Arabian prince, who had come on the old errand of establishing, by single combat, the incomparable nature of the charms of his mistress; he displayed a portable picture gallery, comprehending the portraits of

four and twenty beauties, whose deluded lovers had the presumption to maintain that the charms of their mistresses equalled those of the fair Mizalenza. The prowess of Artabanes not only prevented the resemblance of Parthenissa from being added to the exhibition, but obtained for her at one blow, possession of the *chefs-d'oeuvre* in the collection of his antagonist. Artabanes, however, had a formidable rival in Surena, who was the chief favourite of the king. As Surena found that he made no progress in the affections of Parthenissa, he bribed one of her confidantes to place a letter in the way of Artabanes, purporting that a good understanding subsisted between himself and Parthenissa. Artabanes had, in consequence, a dreadful combat with Surena, whose life, however, he spared, and then abandoned his country, under a firm conviction of the infidelity of Parthenissa, and with the fixed resolution of taking up his residence on the summit of the Alps. On his voyage to that lofty region he was taken by a pirate, who presented him, along with fourscore other captives, to his friend and protector, Pompey, the notorious patron and encourager of pirates. Having afterwards escaped from bondage, Artabanes put himself at the head of his fellow slaves, and, his party increasing, the hero of this

romance turns out to be our old historical friend Spartacus. The account of the war is given correctly, only it is said to be a mistake that Spartacus was killed in the battle of the Trenches; as he not only survived that combat, but relinquished his scheme of Alpine retirement, and came *incognito* to Rome. There a Parthian friend arrived, who cleared up all his suspicions with regard to Parthenissa, and persuaded him to return with him to the East. On his arrival in Asia, he was much encumbered by his old rival Surcna, and also by a new competitor who had sprung up in the person of the monarch. Parthenissa having fallen under the power of the latter, who, she feared, intended to push his gallantry to the utmost, swallowed a potion, which gave her the appearance of death. Our credulous hero believing she was poisoned, was invaded with so high a sorrow that he stabbed himself, but having recovered by aid of surgeons, he had come to Hierapolis, as related near the beginning of the romance, to consult the oracle on what was to be done in this extremity. Callimachus, the priest, in return for the above relation, undertakes the history of his own adventures: he proves to be Nicomedes, king of Bythina, father of Julius Cæsar's Nicomedes; but while his story is telling, a lady, who has all the exterior

appearance of Parthenissa, is perceived to land, and enter a thicket with a young knight. Artabanus, however, could hardly believe her to be his mistress, in the first place, because he knew she was dead ; and, secondly, her behaviour was inconsistent with her fidelity to him and with female decorum. The romance breaks off before the author disengages his heroine from the suspicious predicament in which he had placed her. The unfinished state in which the work has been left, which is the chief objection to Marianne and the Paysan Parvenu, is what no critic will blame in the Parthenissa. Besides the episode of Callimachus, there is also the story of Perolla, one of the adherents of Spartacus, who was enamoured of a fair Capuan, and by a singular misfortune, considering the very different periods at which they flourished, had Hannibal for a rival. Such was the Carthaginian's passion, that while he remained in Italy he delivered up the conduct of all martial affairs unto the generous Maharbal, and declined the conquest of the world to conquer the unfortunate Izadora. Nevertheless he would unavoidably have effected the former object, at the time he advanced to Rome, had not his fair enemy, by the most pressing entreaties, persuaded him to carry his arms to other quarters rather

than employ them in the destruction of that city which had given her birth. Hannibal and Spartacus were, perhaps, the two heroes of antiquity worst qualified to act the parts of whining lovers in a romance ; the latter, especially, excites little interest, and no romantic ideas are associated with his name.

Of the six parts, of which this romance consists, one is dedicated to the duchess of Orleans, and the others to lady Sunderland, better known by the name of Sacharissa.

The circumstance of the work of Lord Orrery, and the *Eliana*, being both left incomplete, shows that there was no great encouragement extended to this species of composition. Indeed, a romance of the description of Parthenissa, though it might be well adapted to the more solemn gallantry of the court of Lewis XIV. was not likely in king Charles's days to be popular in this country, or to produce imitation. There was, in consequence, a demand for something of a lighter and less exalted description, and, accordingly, to this period may be ascribed the origin of that species of composition which, fostered by the improving taste of succeeding times, has been gradually matured into the English novel. In that age appeared the

*Atalantis* of Mrs Manley, which, like the *Astrea*, was filled with fashionable scandal. From this circumstance it was popular for a certain period, and its immortality was foretold by Pope, as rashly as a thousand years of bloom were promised to the Beauties painted by Jarvis.

The novels of Mrs Behn, who died in 1689, were for the most part written towards the close of the reign of Charles the Second. Of this lady, Sir R. Steele said, as we are informed in Granger's Biographical Dictionary, that she understood the practie part of love better than the speculative. Her writings have not escaped the moral contagion which infected the literature of that age; and, indeed, if only one contemporary poet could boast unspotted lays, it can hardly be expected that this should have been the lot of a single novelist. The story of *Oroonoko* is the most interesting of the novels of Mrs Behn, and is not liable to the objections which may be charged against many of the others. The incidents which furnished the outline of this tale fell under the author's own observation when she accompanied her father to Surinam, and, as related by the novelist, have supplied Southey with the plot of one of the best known and most affecting of his tragedies.

Mrs Behn was imitated by Mrs Heywood, who was born in 1696, and died in 1758. Her earlier novels, as *Love in Excess*—*The British Recluse*—*The Injured Husband*, in which she has detailed the intricacies, and unveiled the loosest scenes of intrigue, have all the faults in point of morals, of the productions by which they were preceded. Her male characters are in the highest degree licentious, and her females are as impassioned as the Saracen princesses in the Spanish romances of chivalry. *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*, however, a later and more extended production of this writer, though not free in every passage from the objections that may be charged against her former compositions, is deserving of notice, both on account of its merit, and of having apparently suggested the plan of Miss Burney's *Evelina*.

In the novel of Mrs Heywood, a young lady makes, at an early age, her first appearance in London on the great and busy stage of life. In that city she resides under the protection of Lady Mellasin, a woman of low birth, of vulgar manners, and dissolute character, whose husband had been appointed the guardian of Miss Thoughtless by her father. From this woman, and from the malice and impertinence of her daughter, Miss Flo-



ra, the heroine suffers much uneasiness on her entrance into life. Though possessed of a virtuous mind, a good understanding, and a feeling heart, her heedlessness of ceremony, her ignorance of forms, and inexperience of the manners of the world, occasion many perplexing incidents, and lead her into awkward situations, most mortifying to her vanity, which, at length, alarm the delicacy, and almost for ever alienate the affections, of an amiable and devoted lover.

Evelina; it will be recollected, was placed in an analogous situation, and her embarrassments originated in similar circumstances. The chief perplexity of Mr Trueworth, the admirer of Miss Thoughtless, arose from meeting her in company with Miss Forward, who had been her companion at a boarding-school, and of whose infamous character she was ignorant. In like manner the delicacy of Lord Orville is wounded, and his attachment shaken, by meeting his Evelina in similar society at Vauxhall. The subsequent visit and counsel of the lovers to their mistresses is seen, however, in a very different point of view by the heroines.

But not only is the plan of Betsy Thoughtless analogous to that of Evelina, but many of the characters coincide with those delineated in that co-

lebrated performance. Mr Trueworth is the same generous and pleasing lover as Lord Orville. Lady Mellasin, with whom Miss Thoughtless resides in London, is the same low-born, coarse, and dissolute woman with Mad. Duval. The malice and jealousy with which Miss Flora Mellasin persecutes the heroine in the beginning of the older novel, corresponds to the malice and jealousy of the Miss Branghtons. Miss Mabel, the amiable and modest friend of Betsy Thoughtless, seems to have suggested the character of Miss Mirvan, the companion of Evelina; while in the novel of Mrs Heywood, and of Miss Burney, we may trace the same assurance, affected indifference, and impertinent gallantry, in many of the secondary characters.

Towards the middle of the 18th century the number of English novels rapidly increased. Those which have appeared subsequently to that period may, I think, be divided into the *serious*, the *comic*, and the *romantic*.

At the head of the first class we must unquestionably place the works of Richardson. The earliest performance of that celebrated writer is his *Pamela*, the first part of which was published in 1740. We are informed, in the *Life of Richard-*

son, that the booksellers, for whom he occasionally employed his pen, had requested him to give them a volume of familiar letters on various supposed occasions. It was the intention of the author to render his work subservient to the benefit of the inferior classes of society, but letter producing letter, it grew into a story, and was at length given to the public under the title of the History of Pamela. In the work above quoted, it is said, that the author's object in Pamela is two-fold : to reclaim a libertine by the influence of virtuous affection, and to conduct virtue safe and triumphant through the severest trials to an honourable reward. With this view, a young girl, in the humblest sphere of life, is represented as exposed to the amorous solicitations of her master. The earlier part of the story consists of the attempts practised against her virtue, and her successful resistance, all which are related in letters from Pamela to her parents, whose characters are intended as a representation of the manners and virtues of the humblest sphere of English society. From the unremitting assiduity of her master, however, our heroine begins to think she may play a higher game than a mere escape from his snares : prudence now comes to the aid of purity, and her

master, after a struggle between passion and pride, rewards her by the offer of his hand, which is most thankfully accepted. Two volumes were subsequently added, which exhibited Pamela in the marriage state. From these two parts Goldoni has formed his comedies of *Pamela Nubile*; and *Pamela Maritata*.

On its first appearance, *Pamela* was received with universal applause, but its fame has been in some measure dimmed by the brighter reputation of its author's subsequent performances. Of these, *Clarissa* is the production on which his reputation is principally founded. It is the story, as is universally known, of a young lady, who, to avoid a matrimonial union to which her heart could not consent, and to which she was urged by her parents, casts herself on the protection of a lover, who scandalously abuses the confidence she had reposed in him, and finally succeeds in gratifying his passion, though he had failed in ensnaring her virtue. She rejects the reparation of marriage which was at length tendered, and retires to a solitary abode, where she expires, overwhelmed with grief and with shame. It is a trite remark, that it was reserved for Richardson, in this story, to overcome all circumstances of dishonour and disgrace, to exhibit the dignity of virtue in circumstances the

most painful, and apparently the most degrading, and to show, which seems to be the great moral of the work, that in every situation virtue is triumphant.

The chief merit of Richardson consists in his delineation of character. *Clarissa* is the model of female excellence. There is something similar in the rest of the Harlowe family, and at the same time something peculiar to each individual. "The stern father," says Mrs Barbauld, "the passionate and dark-souled brother, the envious and ill-natured sister, the money-loving uncles, the gentle but weak-spirited mother, are all assimilated by that stiffness, love of parade, and solemnity, which is thrown over the whole group, and by the interested family views in which they all concur." The character of Lovelace, as is well known, is an expansion of that of Lothario in the *Fair Penitent*; but, in the opinion of Dr Johnson, expressed in his *Life of Rowe*, the novelist has greatly excelled his original in the moral effect of the fiction. "Lothario," says the illustrious biographer, "with galeaty which cannot be hated, and bravery which cannot be despised, retains too much of the spectator's kindness. It was in the power of Richardson alone to teach us at once esteem and detestation; to make virtuous resentment overpower all

the benevolence which art and elegance and courage naturally excite ; and to lose at last the hero in the villain."

But though the character of Lovelace may not perhaps be objectionable in its moral tendency, there is no representation, in the whole range of fiction, which is such an outrage on verisimilitude. Such a character as Lovelace not only never existed, but seems incompatible with human nature. Great crimes may be hastily perpetrated where there is no strong motive for their commission, but a long course of premeditated villainy has always some assignable object which cannot be innocently attained.

Richardson having exhibited in his *Clarissa* a model of female delicacy, grace, and dignity, attempted in *Sir Charles Grandison*, his third and last production, to represent a perfect male character, who should unite every personal advantage and fashionable accomplishment with the strict observance of the duties of morality and religion. All the incidents have a reference to the multifarious interests of this "faultless monster;" and the other characters seem only introduced to give him an opportunity of displaying in every light his various perfections, with the exception perhaps of *Clementina*, whose mental alienation is

painted with such genuine touches of nature and passion, that it would scarcely suffer in a comparison with the phrensy of Orestes, or madness of Lear.

Thus, the object of Richardson in all his novels is to show the superiority of virtue. He attempts, in *Pamela*, to render the character of a libertine contemptible, and to exhibit the excellence of virtue in an unpolished mind, with the temporal reward which it sometimes obtains. On the other hand, in *Clarissa* he has displayed the beauty of mental perfection, though in this life it should fail of its recompence. In *Sir Charles Grandison* he has shown that moral goodness heightens and embellishes every talent and accomplishment.

Besides the publications of Richardson, there are several other productions of English fiction distinguished by their tenderness and pathos, and of which the chief object is to excite our sympathy. In *Sidney Biddulph*, by Mrs Sheridan, every affliction is accumulated on the innocent heroine, in order to show that neither prudence nor foresight, nor the best dispositions of the human heart, are sufficient to defend from the evils of life. This work, we are told, was written in opposition to the moral system then fashionable, that virtue and happiness are constant concomitants, or, as ex-

pressed by Congreve in the conclusion of the Mourning Bride,—

That blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds,  
And though a late, a sure reward succeeds.

In the writings of Godwin, some of the strongest of our feelings are most forcibly awakened, and there are few novels which display more powerful painting, or excite higher interest, than his Caleb Williams. The character of Falkland, the chief actor, which is formed on visionary principles of honour, is perhaps not strictly an invention, as it closely resembles that of Shamont, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Nice Valour*. But the accumulated wretchedness with which he is overwhelmed, the inscrutable mystery by which he is surrounded, and the frightful persecutions to which he subjects the suspected possessor of his dreadful secret, are peculiar to the author, and are represented with a force which has not been surpassed in the finest passages and scenes of poetic or dramatic fiction. Godwin's other novel, *St Leon*, is intended to show that the happiness of mankind would not have been augmented by the gifts of immortal youth and inexhaustible riches: But, in fact, the story does not establish the un-



satisfactory nature of such endowments. St Leon, except in the reserve and distrust created in his domestic circle, always appears rather to be persecuted by his ill fortune, than by the consequences of his supernatural acquisitions. It is unfortunate too that, in order to show the protracted misery produced by the elixir of life, the author was forced to place his hero in a remote and superstitious age, since we can never help reflecting how different would have been the fate of St Leon had he lived in a happier land and more enlightened period.

His misfortunes also are too much of the same description, as they chiefly arise from personal captivity—his successive imprisonments in the jail of Constance, the cells of the Inquisition at Madrid, and the dungeon of Bethlem Gabor. Hence that portion of the romance which precedes his acquirement of the elixir of life and secret of the transmutation of metals, has always appeared to me the most interesting. The historical part, relating to the Italian campaigns which terminated with the battle of Pavia, is told with infinite spirit. The domestic life of St Leon is admirably exhibited in the contrasts of chivalrous splendour, the wretchedness of want, and the comforts of competence; while Marguerite, alternately embellish-

ing, supporting, and cheering these varied scenes of existence, forms one of the finest representations of female excellence that has ever been displayed. The character, too, of St Leon is ably sustained—we are charmed with his early loyalty and patriotism—his elevation of soul and tender attachment to his family ; while, at the same time, his fondness for magnificence and admiration naturally prepares his acceptance of the pernicious gifts of the alchymist. Through the whole romance the dialogues are full of eloquence, and almost every scene is sketched with the strong and vivid pencil of a master. Never was escape more interesting than that of St Leon from the *Auto da Fe* at Valladolid, or landscape more heart-reviving than that of his subsequent journey to the mansion of his fathers ! Never did human genius portray a more frightful picture of solitude and mental desolation, than that of the mysterious stranger who arrives at the cottage of St Leon, and leaves him the fatal bequest ! At the conclusion we are left with the strongest impressions of those feelings of desertion and deadness of heart experienced by St Leon, and which were aggravated by his constant remembrance of scenes of former happiness.

Of the authors of *Comic Romance*, the two most eminent, as every one knows, are Fielding and Smollett, concerning whose works I shall not detain the reader. No one wishes to be told, for the twentieth time, that the former is distinguished for his delineation of country squires, and the latter of naval characters. The eminence of each, in these different kinds of painting, is a strong proof how necessary experience and intercourse with the world are to a painter of manners—Fielding for some years having been a country squire, and Smollett a surgeon's mate on board a ship of the line. *Tom Jones* is the most celebrated of Fielding's works, and is perhaps the most distinguished of all comic romances. The author warmly interests us in the fortunes of his hero, involves him, by a series of incidents, in the greatest difficulties; and again, when all is dark and gloomy, by a train of events, at once natural and extraordinary, he relieves both his hero and his reader from distress. Never was a work more admirably planned; not a single circumstance occurs which does not, in some degree, contribute to the catastrophe; and, besides, what humour and *nai-veté*, what wonderful force and truth in the delineation of incident! As a story, *Tom Jones* seems

to have only one defect, which might have been so easily remedied, that it is to be regretted that it should have been neglected by the author. Jones, after all, proves illegitimate, when there would have been no difficulty for the author to have supposed that his mother had been privately married to the young clergyman. This would not only have removed the stain from the birth of the hero, but, in the idea of the reader, would have given him better security for the property of his uncle Allworthy. In fact, in a miserable continuation which has been written of the history of Tom Jones, the wrongheaded author (of whom Blifil was the favourite,) has made his hero bring an action against Tom after the death of Mr Allworthy, and oust him from his uncle's property.

Of the writings of Smollett, by far the most original is *Humphry Clinker*. In this novel the author most successfully executes, what had scarcely ever been before attempted—a representation of the different effects which the same scenes, and persons, and transactions, have on different dispositions and tempers. He exhibits through the whole work a most lively and humorous delineation, confirming strongly the great moral truth, that happiness and all our feelings are the result, less of external circumstances, than the constitu-

tion of the mind. In his other writings, the sailors of Smollett are most admirably delineated—their mixture of rudeness and tenderness—their narrow prejudices—thoughtless extravagance—dauntless valour—and warm generosity. In his *Peregrine Pickle*, Smollett's sea characters are a little caricatured, but the character of Tom Bowling, in *Roderick Random*, has something even sublime, and will be regarded in all ages as a happy exhibition of those naval heroes, to whom Britain is indebted for so much of her happiness and glory.

Although, as has been already mentioned, it is not my design to enter into a minute consideration of English novels, an analysis of which would require some volumes, it would not be proper altogether to overlook a *Romantic* species of novel, which seems in a great measure peculiar to the English, which differs in some degree from any fiction of which I have yet given an account, and which has recommended itself to a numerous class of readers by exciting powerful emotions of terror.

“There exists,” says an elegant writer, “in every breast at all susceptible of the influence of imagination, the germ of a certain superstitious dread of the world unknown, which easily suggests the ideas of commerce with it. Solitude—dark-

ness—low-whispered sounds—obscure glimpses of objects, tend to raise in the mind that thrilling mysterious terror, which has for its object ‘the powers unseen, and mightier far than we.’”

It is perhaps singular, that emotions so powerful and universal should not have been excited by fiction at an earlier period; for this species of composition cannot be traced higher than the *Castle of Otranto*, by Horace Walpole.

The following curious account of the origin and composition of this romance is given by the author himself in a letter to Mr Cole, dated Strawberry-Hill, March 9, 1769. “Shall I confess to you what was the origin of this romance? I waked one morning in the beginning of last June from a dream, of which all I could recover was, that I had thought myself in an ancient castle, (a very natural dream for a head filled like mine with Gothic story,) and that on the uppermost bannister of a great stair-case, I saw a gigantic hand in armour. In the evening I sat down and began to write, without knowing in the least what I intended to say or relate. The work grew on my hands, and I grew fond of it. Add, that I was very glad to think of any thing rather than politics. In short, I was so engrossed with my tale, which I completed in less than two months, that one evening

I wrote from the time I had drunk tea, about six o'clock, till half an hour after one in the morning, when my hand and fingers were so weary, that I could not hold the pen to finish the sentence, but left Matilda and Isabella talking in the middle of a paragraph. You will laugh at my earnestness, but, if I have amused you by retracing with any fidelity the manners of ancient days, I am content."

To the work, however, which was written with so much interest, Mr Walpole did not affix his name, but published it as a translation from an Italian author, whom he called Onuphrio Montalto : he also feigned that it had been originally printed in black letter at Naples, in 1529, and that it had been recently discovered in the library of an ancient catholic family in the north of England. The production was ill received on its first appearance, and the extravagant commendations heaped on the imaginary author by the real one, appear abundantly absurd, now that the deception has been discovered.

The work is declared by Mr Walpole to be an attempt to blend the ancient romance and modern novel ; but, if by the ancient romance be meant the tales of chivalry, the extravagance of the *Castle of Otranto* has no resemblance to their machi-

nery. What analogy have skulls or skeletons—sliding pannels—damp vaults—trap-doors—and dismal apartments, to the tented fields of chivalry and its airy enchantments?

It has been much doubted, whether the Castle of Otranto was seriously or comically intended; if seriously, it is a most feeble attempt to excite awe or terror; an immense helmet is a wretched instrument for inspiring supernatural dread, and the machinery is so violent that it destroys the effect it was intended to raise. A sword which requires a hundred men to lift it—blood dropping from the nose of a statue—the hero imprisoned in a helmet, resemble not a first and serious attempt at a new species of composition, but look as if devised in ridicule of preceding extravagance, as Don Quixote was written to expose the romances of chivalry, by an aggravated representation of their absurdities.

But, whether seriously intended or written in jest, the story of the Castle of Otranto contains all the elements of this species of composition. We have hollow groans, gothic windows that exclude the light, and trap-doors with flights of steps descending to dismal vaults. The deportment, too, of the domestics, the womanish terrors



of waiting-maids, and the delay produced by their coarse pleasantries and circumlocutions, have been imitated in all similar productions. For this incongruity, Mr Walpole offers as an apology, that Shakspeare was the model he copied, who, in his deepest tragedies, has introduced the coarse humour of grave-diggers and clumsy jests of Roman citizens. He argues, that however important may be the duties, and however grave and melancholy the sensations, of heroes and princes, the same affections are not stamped on their domestics, at least they do not express their passions in the same dignified tone, and the contrast thus produced between the sublime of the one, and the *naïveté* of the other, sets the pathetic of the former in a stronger point of view.

The *Old English Baron*, written by Clara Reeve, and published in 1780, is the literary offspring of the *Castle of Otranto*, and, like it, hinges on the discovery of a murder by supernatural agency, and the consequent restoration of the rightful heir to his titles and fortune. This romance is announced as an attempt to unite the most attractive and interesting circumstances of the ancient romance, with the incidents and feelings of real life. The latter, however, are sometimes too accurately re-

presented, and the most important and heroic characters in the work exhibit a natural anxiety about settlements, stocking of farms, and household furniture, which ill assimilates with the gigantic and awful features of the romance.—“Sir Philip had a conference with Lord Fitz-Owen, concerning the surrender of the estate, in which he insisted on the furniture, and stocking of the farm, in consideration of the arrears. Lord Fitz-Owen slightly mentioned the young man’s education and expences. Sir Philip answered, ‘You are right, my lord, I had not thought of this point.’” And again, “‘You, my son, shall take possession of your uncle’s house and estate, only obliging you to pay to each of your younger brothers the sum of one thousand pounds.’” The baron caught Sir Philip’s hand; “‘Noble sir, I will be your tenant for the present. My castle in Wales shall be put in repair in the mean time. There is another house on my estate that has been shut up many years. I will have it repaired and furnished properly at my own charge.’”

The observations on the romantic species of novel, may conclude with the writings of Mrs Radcliffe, since those who followed her in the same path, have in general imitated her manner with such servility, that they have produced little that

is new either in incident or machinery. The three most celebrated of her productions, and indeed the only ones which I have read, are the *Romance of the Forest*, the *Mysteries of Udolpho*, and the *Italian, or Confessional of the Black Penitents*.

Of this justly celebrated woman, the principal object seems to have been to raise powerful emotions of surprise, awe, and especially terror, by means and agents apparently supernatural. To effect this, she places her characters, and transports her readers, amid scenes which are calculated strongly to excite the mind, and to predispose it for spectral illusion : gothic castles, gloomy abbeys, subterraneous passages, the haunts of banditti, the sobbing of the wind, and the howling of the storm, are all employed for this purpose ; and in order that these may have their full effect, the principal character in her romances is always a lovely and unprotected female, encompassed with snares, and surrounded by villains. But, that in which the works of Mrs Radcliffe chiefly differ from those by which they were preceded is, that in the *Castle of Otranto* and *Old English Baron*, the machinery is in fact supernatural, whereas the means and agents employed by Mrs Radcliffe are in reality human, and such as can be, or, at

least, are professed to be, explained by natural events. By these means she certainly excites a very powerful interest, as the reader meanwhile experiences the full impression of the wonderful and terrific appearances; but there is one defect which attends this mode of composition, and which seems indeed to be inseparable from it. As it is the intention of the author, that the mysteries should be afterwards cleared up, they are all mountains in labour, and even when she is successful in explaining the marvellous circumstances which have occurred, we feel disappointed that we should have been so agitated by trifles. But the truth is, they never are properly explained, and the author, in order to raise strong emotions of fear and horror in the body of the work, is tempted to go lengths, to account for which the subsequent explanations seem utterly inadequate. Thus, for example, after all the wonder and dismay, and terror and expectation, excited by the mysterious chamber in the castle of Udolpho, how much are we disappointed and disgusted to find that all this pother has been raised by an image of wax! In short, we may say not only of Mrs Radcliffe's castles, but of her works in general, that they abound "in passages that lead to nothing."

In the writings of this author there is a considerable degree of uniformity and mannerism, which is perhaps the case with all the productions of a strong and original genius. Her heroines too nearly resemble each other, or rather they possess hardly any shade of difference. They have all blue eyes and auburn hair—the form of each of them has “the airy lightness of a nymph”—they are all fond of watching the setting sun, and catching the purple tints of evening, and the vivid glow or fading splendour of the western horizon. Unfortunately they are all likewise early risers. I say unfortunately, for in every exigency Mrs Radcliffe’s heroines are provided with a pencil and paper, and the sun is never allowed to rise or set in peace. Like Tilburina in the play, they are “inconsolable to the minuet in Ariadne,” and in the most distressing circumstances find time to compose sonnets to sun-rise, the bat, a sea-nymph, a lily, or a butterfly.

Mrs Radcliffe is indeed too lavish of her landscapes, and her readers have frequent occasion to lament that she did not follow the example of Mr Puff in the play, “I open with a clock striking, to beget an awful attention in the audience—it also marks the time, which is four o’clock in the morning, and saves a description of the rising sun,

and a great deal about gilding the eastern hemisphere." It must be owned, however, that the landscapes of Mrs Radcliffe are eminently beautiful, and their only fault is their too frequent recurrence. It would perhaps have puzzled William of Wyckham to comprehend the plan of her Gothic castles, but they are sufficiently vast, intricate, and gloomy. Nor does this writer excel only in painting rural nature, the accidents of light and shade, or castles and forests, but in descriptions of the effect of music, and, in short, she is eminent for picturesque delineation in general—for every thing by which the imagination or senses are affected. I know not that a more striking portrait is any where exhibited than that of Schedoni; and the strong impression he makes on our fancy is perhaps chiefly owing to the very powerful painting which is given of his external appearance.

Of the arts of composition, one of those most frequently employed by Mrs Radcliffe, and which also arises from her love of picturesque effect, is contrast—or the making scenes of different characters or qualities succeed and relieve each other. In this circumstance at least the fair writer agrees with Mr Puff:

*Puff.* You have no more cannon to fire?

*Prompter from within.* No, sir !

*Puff.* Now then for soft music.

Mrs Radcliffe makes her soft music succeed her cannon with considerable felicity. Thus Emily is conducted by Bertrand and Ugo to a sweet cottage at the foot of the Appenines, previous to the siege of the gloomy castle of Udolpho, in which ghastly fabric she is soon afterwards replaced. In the Romance of the Forest also, not satisfied with Adeline's visit to the dreary tomb, and her journey with her treacherous guide through the midnight obscurity of the forest, she introduces a storm of thunder and lightning, as is likewise done in Emily's journey from Udolpho, in order to contrast more strongly the gay magnificence and soothing beauty of the villa of the marquis.

Akin to this distribution of light and shade, and in order to produce still farther effects of contrast and variety, there is a servant introduced into all these romances, who is recommended to us by simplicity and fidelity—Annette in Udolpho, and in the other two, Jeronimo and Peter. In the Romance of the Forest, the venerable La Luc, accompanied by his daughter and Adeline, visits the Glaciers, and we are in the first place stunned by a description of cataracts, and made giddy with

precipices, lakes, and mountains—"they seated themselves," continues the author, "on the grass, under the shade of some high trees, near the ruins. An opening in the woods afforded a view of the distant Alps—the deep silence of solitude reigned. For some time they were lost in meditation.

"Adeline felt a sweet complacency, such as she had long been a stranger to. Looking at La Luc, she perceived a tear stealing down his cheek, while the elevation of his mind was strongly expressed on his countenance. He turned on Clara his eyes, which were now filled with tenderness, and made an effort to recover himself.

"The stillness and total seclusion of the scene, said Adeline, those stupendous mountains, the gloomy grandeur of these woods, together with that monument of faded glory, on which the hand of time is so emphatically impressed, diffuse a sacred enthusiasm over the mind, and awaken sensations truly sublime.

"La Luc was going to speak, but Peter coming forward, desired to know whether he had not better open the wallet, as he fancied his honour and the young ladies must be main hungry, jogging on so far, up hill and down, before dinner. They



acknowledged the truth of honest Peter's suspicion, and took the hint."

In all her under characters, Mrs Radcliffe is extremely fond of delineating their circumlocution—their habit of answering from the point, or giving a needless detail of trivial circumstances, when the enquirer is on the gasp of expectation, and the utmost expedition is requisite. I shall give the first instance that occurs to me. "Peter," says the author, "having been one day to Aubaine for the weekly supply of provisions, returned with intelligence that awakened in La Motte new apprehension and anxiety.

"Oh, sir, I've heard something that has astonished me, as well it may, (cried Peter)—and so it will you when you come to know it. As I was standing in the blacksmith's shop while the smith was driving a nail into the horse's shoe (by the bye the horse lost it in an odd way)—I'll tell you, sir, how it was.

"Nay, pr'ythee, leave it till another time, and go on with your story.

"Why, then, sir, as I was standing in the blacksmith's shop, comes in a man with a pipe in his mouth, and a large pouch of tobacco in his hand.

“ Well—what has the pipe to do with the story ?

“ Nay, sir, you put me out : I can’t go on unless you let me tell it my own way. As I was saying with a pipe in his mouth—I think I was there, your honour ?

“ Yes, yes.

“ He sets himself down on the bench, and taking the pipe from his mouth, says to the blacksmith, ‘ Neighbour, do you know any body of the name of La Motte hereabouts ?’—Bless your honour, I turned all of a cold sweat in a minute ! Is not your honour well ? shall I fetch you any thing ?

“ No—but be brief in your narration.

“ La Motte ! La Motte ! said the blacksmith, I think I have heard the name. Have you so ? said I ; you’re cunning then, for there’s no such person hereabouts to my knowledge.

“ Fool ! why did you say that ?

“ Because I did not want them to know your honour was here ; and if I had not managed very cleverly, they would have found me out.” In short, it appears by the sequel that honest Peter managed so very cleverly, that they by this very management did find him out.

It is impossible to give any specimen of the terrific scenes of Mrs Radcliffe, as their effect depends on the previous excitement of the mind. They are in general admirably contrived in circumstances of time, place, and other incidents, to excite awe and apprehension. "A face shrouded in a cowl," says a writer whom I have frequently quoted, "a narrative suddenly suspended—deep guilt half-revealed—the untold secrets of a prison house, affect the mind more powerfully than any regular or distinct images of danger or of woe." Mrs Radcliffe accordingly, by interspersing certain mysterious hints, gives full scope to conjecture and alarm, and aggravates the terrible, by leaving room to suppose that what she describes is little in comparison with what is afterwards to be revealed. By the involuntary expressions of her guilty characters, she presents them to our view as groaning under the consciousness of some dreadful crime, which is constantly present to their imaginations, but of which the remembrance does not prevent them from the perpetration of new atrocities. In short, in the hands of Mrs Radcliffe, not merely the trampling of a steed, and the pauses of the wind, but, in certain circumstances, even common footsteps and the shutting of a door become sublime and terrible.

Of the three great works of Mrs Radcliffe, the *Romance of the Forest*, which was suggested by one of the *Causes Celebres*, is perhaps on the whole, and as a whole, the most interesting and perfect in its fable. Abounding less in powerful writing than either of the others, the story is more naturally conducted, and is clogged with fewer improbabilities. Indeed, the apparently supernatural circumstances are accounted for at the end of the romance in such a manner as scarcely to disappoint the reader, or to appear inadequate to the emotions of surprise and terror, which had been raised in the course of the work. The beginning of the romance is such as strongly to awaken interest; the mysterious flight of La Motte—the manner in which the heroine of the story is intrusted to him—the romantic forest and ruined abbey in which he takes shelter—his alarms for discovery—the arrival of his son—his visits to the awful tomb in the forest—the introduction of the wicked Marquis de Montalt, his deep-laid plots and sudden change of conduct towards Adeline, are all described in the most forcible manner. We are delighted with the wild and romantic seclusion of the abbey, and the spectral part of the story (if I may so express myself) is not exaggerated nor overcharged. There is scarcely to be found

in any work of fiction, a more beautiful picture than that of La Luc and his family in the third volume; and it shows that Mrs Radcliffe was capable of painting, not merely the general features of the personages in a romance, but the finer traits of character in a novel of real life. Clara de Luc is the most interesting female character in the volumes of Mrs Radcliffe. In the Romance of the Forest also we are less fatigued with landscapes, than in the Mysteries of Udolpho or the Italian. It is true, that the heroine Adeline is pretty liberal of her poesy, but in this case we are warned of our danger, and can avoid it; whereas in prose we have no previous notice, and are forced to observe the purple tints, and all the other tints which occur, or in the course of ages may occur at sun-rise or sun-set, lest we may unwarily pass over and lose any of the incidents.

It is to be regretted, that the last volume of the Italian, or that portion of it which relates to the Inquisition, has not been managed with more skill, as, by its improbability and exaggeration, it in a great measure destroys the very powerful interest which the other parts of the romance are calculated to inspire. Schedoni is wonderfully well painted; and his appearance, his mysteriousness, and

the notion with which we are strongly impressed, of his having committed horrible and unheard-of crimes, strongly excite our curiosity and interest. The Neapolitan landscapes in this romance are truly beautiful; nor are the scenes of terror less forcibly portrayed. How many accumulated circumstances of danger thrill us with alarm, in the description of the escape of Vivaldi and Ellena from the convent! How deeply are we impressed by the midnight examination of the corse of Bianchi, and the atrocious conference of the Marchesa with Schedoni, in the dim twilight of the church of San Nicolo! But, beyond all, the whole portion of the work, from where Ellena is conveyed to the desolate house of Spalatro on the sea-shore, to the chapter where she is conducted home by Schedoni, is in the first style of excellence, and has neither been exceeded in dramatic nor romantic fiction. The terror is not such as is excited by the moving of old tapestry, a picture with a black veil, the howling of the wind in a dark passage, or a skeleton in a corner, with a rusty dagger lying at its side; but is that which is raised by a delineation of guilt, horror, and remorse, which, if Shakspeare has equalled, he has not surpassed. A scene between Schedoni and Spalatro, before and after the former enters the

- apartment of Ellena, with a design to murder her, is perhaps the most striking that has ever been displayed. The conversation, too, of the guide who conducts Ellena and Schedoni through the forest, after they leave Spalatro, and the whole conduct of Schedoni on the occasion, is admirably painted.

The style of Mrs Radcliffe is not pure, and is sometimes even ungrammatical, but in general it is rich and forcible. Her poetry, like her prose, principally consists in picturesque delineation.

On the whole, the species of composition which we have just been considering, though neither very instructive in its nature, nor so fitted, as some other kinds of fictitious writing, to leave agreeable impressions on the mind, is not without its value. To persons who are occupied with very severe and serious studies, romances of this kind afford perhaps a better relaxation than those which approach more nearly to the common business of life. The general tendency, too, of all these terrific works is virtuous. The wicked marquis, or villainous monk, meet at length the punishment they deserve, while the happy heroine, undisturbed by hobgoblins, or the illusions created by the creaking of doors, sobbing of the wind, or partial beams of light, discovers at length that the ter-

rific castle, or mouldering abbey, in which she had been alarmed or tormented, is a part of her own domain, and enjoys in connubial happiness the extensive property of which she had unjustly been deprived. All this may be very absurd, but life perhaps has few things better than sitting at the chimney-corner in a winter evening, after a well-spent day, and reading such absurdities.

The above divisions of the Serious, Comic, and Romantic novels, comprehend the great proportion of English prose fictions. In this country we have had few of those works in which fable and history are blended, and which form so extensive a class of French novels. With the exception, perhaps, of the *Citizen of the World*, we have no production of any celebrity resembling the *Jewish Spy*, or *Persian Letters*, and in which various remarks on the manners and customs of a country are presented through the supposed medium of a foreigner, unbiassed by the habits and associations of a native. In the class of *Fairy and Oriental Tales*, we are equally deficient ; but in that of the *Voyages Imaginaires*, no nation of Europe has produced three performances of equal merit with *Robinson Crusoe*, *Gulliver's Travels*, and *Gaudentio di Lucca*.



De Foe and Swift, the authors of the two former of these works, though differing very widely in education, opinions, and character, have at the same time some strong points of resemblance. Both are remarkable for the unaffected simplicity of their narratives—both intermingle so many minute circumstances, and state so particularly names of persons, and dates, and places, that the reader is involuntarily surprised into a persuasion of their truth. It seems impossible that what is so artlessly told should be a fiction, especially as the narrators begin the account of their voyages with such references to persons living, or whom they assert to be alive, and whose place of residence is so accurately mentioned, that one is led to believe a relation must be genuine which could, if false, have been so easily convicted of falsehood. The incidents, too, are so very circumstantial, that we think it impossible they could have been mentioned unless they had been real. For example, instead of telling us, like other writers, that Robinson Crusoe in his first voyage was shipwrecked, and giving a mere general description of mountainous billows, piercing shrieks, and other concomitants of a tempest, De Foe immediately verifies his narrative by an enumeration of particulars.—“ So partly row-

ing," says he, " and partly driving, our boat went away to the northward, sloping towards the shore, almost as far as Winterton-Ness. But we made slow way towards the shore ; nor were we able to reach it till, being past the light-house at Winterton, the shore falls off to the westward towards Cromer, and so the land broke off a little the violence of the wind."

Those minute references immediately lead us to give credit to the whole narrative, since we think they would hardly have been mentioned unless they had been true. The same circumstantial detail of facts is remarkable in *Gulliver's Travels*, and we are led on by them to a partial belief in the most improbable narrations.<sup>1</sup>

But the moral of *Robinson Crusoe* is very different from that of *Gulliver's Travels*. In the former we are delighted with the spectacle of difficulty overcome, and with the power of human ingenuity and contrivance to provide not only accommodation but comfort, in the most unfavourable circumstances. Never did human being excite more sympathy in his fate than this shipwrecked mariner : we enter into all his doubts and difficul-

<sup>1</sup> There is a good deal of this style of writing in a French work already mentioned, *Sadeur's Voyage to Australasia*, written by Gabriel de Foigni, about the year 1676.

ties, and every rusty nail which he acquires fills us with satisfaction. We thus learn to appreciate our own comforts, and we acquire, at the same time, a habit of activity ; but, above all, we attain a trust and devout confidence in divine mercy and goodness. The author also, by placing his hero in an uninhabited island in the Western Ocean, had an opportunity of introducing scenes which, with the merit of truth, have all the wildness and horror of the most incredible fiction. *That* foot in the sand—*Those* Indians who land on the solitary shore to devour their captives, fill us with alarm and terror, and, after being relieved from the fear of Crusoe perishing by famine, we are agitated by new apprehensions for his safety. The deliverance of Friday, and the whole character of that young Indian, are painted in the most beautiful manner ; and, in short, of all the works of fiction that have ever been composed, Robinson Crusoe is perhaps the most interesting and instructive.

The moral effect of Gulliver's Travels is very different. It would, perhaps, be too much to say that the author had an express design to blacken and calumniate human nature, but at least his work betrays evident marks of a diseased imagination and a lacerated heart—in short, of that frame of mind which led him in the epitaph he

composed for himself, to describe the tomb as the abode, *Ubi sacra indignatio ulterius cor lacerare nequit*. We rise, accordingly, from Gulliver's Travels, not as from the work of De Foe, exulting in our nature, but giddy, and selfish, and discontented, and, from some parts, I may almost say brutified. The general effect, indeed, of works of satire and humour is perhaps little favourable to the mind, and they are only allowable, and may be read with profit, when employed as the scourges of vice or folly.

Gaudentio di Lucca is generally, and, I believe, on good grounds, supposed to be the work of the celebrated Berkeley, bishop of Cloyne, one of the most profound philosophers and virtuous visionaries of his age. We are told, in the life of this celebrated man, that Plato was his favourite author ; and, indeed, of all English writers, Berkeley has most successfully imitated the style and manner of that philosopher. It is not impossible, therefore, that the fanciful Republic of the Grecian sage may have led Berkeley to write Gaudentio di Lucca, of which the principal object, apparently, is to describe a faultless and patriarchal form of government. This representation of perfection and happiness is exhibited in the journey of Gaudentio di Lucca to Mezzoramia, a country

in the heart of the deserts of Africa, whose inhabitants had lived unknown to the rest of the world, and in a region inaccessible, except by the road by which Gaudentio was carried thither. This Italian having followed a sea-faring life, was taken by corsairs, and conveyed to Alexandria. He was there sold to one of the chiefs, or pophars, of this unknown country, who had come to Egypt on mercantile speculation. The best and most striking part of the work is the description of the journey across the desert sands, which the travellers traverse on dromedaries, and which are happily contrasted with those stations that lay on the road, where they sought repose and shelter. The region which Gaudentio finally reaches is described as a terrestrial paradise, and its government, laws, and customs, are what the author conceives to be most perfect in civil polity and social intercourse. His views are somewhat fantastic, but not so visionary as those exhibited in the Utopia. During his abode in this happy land, Gaudentio, who had been discovered to be the grand-nephew of the master whom he had followed to Mezzoramia, is treated with much distinction, and, at length, espouses the daughter of the pophar. But after a residence of twenty-five years, having lost his wife and children, he sets

out for his own country, and, after some adventures, arrives at Bologna, where he is arrested by the inquisition, and forced to give an account of his adventures.

The style of this work is extremely pure, and some of the incidents, especially that of the Grand Vizier's daughter, who was afterwards sultana, exceedingly well managed. The portrait of the English Freethinker, towards the end of the work, is skilfully drawn, and the absurdity of the arguments of Hobbes very humorously displayed.

From the popularity of Robinson Crusoe, many compositions of a similar description appeared in England towards the middle of last century. Such are the "Travels and Adventures of William Binglefield, Esq.;" and also the "Life and Adventures of John Daniel, containing his Shipwreck with One Companion on a Desolate Island: his accidental Discovery of a Woman. Their peopling of the Island. Also a Description of an Eagle invented by his Son Jacob, on which he flew to the Moon, with some Account of its Inhabitants. His Return, and accidental Fall into the Habitation of a Sea-Monster, with whom he lived Two Years." Of all these fictions, the best is the Voyage of Peter Wilkins, which was written about 1750, and has now fallen into unmerited neglect. In that work,

the simplicity of the language of De Foe, and also several of the incidents of his most celebrated production have been happily imitated. As in Robinson Crusoe, Peter Wilkins is a mariner, who, after undergoing various calamities at sea, is thrown on a distant uninhabited shore. He is furnished with stores, utensils, and provisions, from the wreck of the ship in which he had sailed. De Foe, however, confines himself to incidents within the sphere of possibility, while the unknown author of Peter Wilkins has related many supernatural adventures—he has also created a new species of beings, which are amongst the most beautiful offsprings of imagination, and have been acknowledged in the *Curse of Kehama*, as the origin of the *Glendoveers* :—

The loveliest race of all of heavenly birth,  
Hovering with gentle motion o'er the earth,  
Amid the moonlight air,  
*In sportive flight still floating round and round.*

I have now finished what I proposed to write on the *History and Progress of Fiction*. To some of my readers I may appear, perhaps, to have

dwelt too shortly on some topics, and to have bestowed a disproportionate attention on others ; nor is it improbable that in a work of such extent and variety, omissions may have occurred of what ought not to have been neglected. Such defects were inseparable from an enquiry of this description, and must have, in some degree, existed even if I could have bestowed on it undivided attention, and if, instead of a relaxation, it had been my sole employment. I shall consider myself, however, as having effected much if I turn to this subject the attention of other writers, whose opportunities of doing justice to it are more favourable than my own. A work, indeed, of the kind I have undertaken, is not of a nature to be perfected by a single individual, and at a first attempt, but must be the result of successive investigations. By the assistance of preceding researches on the same subject, the labour of the future enquirer will be abridged, and he will thus be enabled to correct the mistakes, and supply the deficiencies, of those who have gone before him.





## APPENDIX.



## APPENDIX.

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No. I.—p. 48.

### JEAN PIERRE CAMUS

was born at Paris, 1582, of a family of some distinction : he was elevated to the bishopric of Beley before he was twenty-six years of age, and in this situation was remarkable for the conscientious discharge of his ecclesiastical duties : he was much beloved by the protestants, but drew on himself the hatred of the monks, against whom he declaimed and wrote without intermission for many years. In 1629, Camus resigned his bishopric, and retired to an abbacy in Normandy, granted him by the king. Afterwards, however, he was prevailed on to accept of ecclesiastical preferment, and was nominated to the bishopric of Arras ; but before his bulls arrived from Rome, he died in the seventieth year of his age, in 1652,

and was carried, in compliance with his instructions, to the hospital of Incurables.

The numerous sermons he delivered, some of which were afterwards published, are remarkable for their *naïveté*. One day pronouncing a discourse, which he had been appointed to preach before the *Trois Etats*, he asked, "What would our fathers have said to have seen offices of judicature in the hands of women and children? What remains but to admit, like the Roman emperor, horses to the parliament? And why not, since so many asses have got in already?" He also said one day from the pulpit, that a single person might blaspheme, lie, or commit murder, but there was another sin so great *qu' il falloit etre deux de le commettre*. In somewhat better taste was his appeal to the charity of a numerous auditory.—"Messieurs, on recommande a vos charités une jeune damoiselle qui n' a pas assez de bien pour faire *Voeu de Pauvreté*." A great number of similar anecdotes concerning Camus, though not implicitly to be depended on, may be found in the *Menagiana*.

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No. II.—p. 102.

SCARRON.

Paul Scarron was born at Paris in 1610. He was of a respectable family, and was son to a man of considerable fortune. After the death of his mother his father again married. Scarron became an object of aversion to this second wife, and was, in a manner, driven from his paternal mansion. He assumed the clerical habit, which was by no means consonant to his disposition, travelled into Italy, and at his return continued to reside in Paris. A great part of his youth was passed in the society of Marion de Lorme and Ninon L'Enclos, whose gaiety, joined to their mild and accommodating morality, may have contributed, in some degree, to form the disposition of Scarron. The excesses in which he engaged destroyed his constitution—an acrid humour is said to have distilled on his nerves, and to have baffled all the skill of his physicians. At the age of twenty-seven he was seized with sciatica and rheumatism, and the most singular complication of painful and debilitating disorders; the approach of these distempers is said to have been accelerated by a frolic, in which he engaged during a carnival, in which he disguised himself as a savage, and being hunted by the mob, was forced for some time to conceal him-

self from his pursuers in a marsh. Whatever may have been the cause, he was, at the age of thirty, reduced to that state of physical reprobation, which he describes in a picture he has drawn of himself. "My person was formerly well made, though little; my disorder has shortened it a foot; my legs and thighs first formed an obtuse angle, and at length an acute angle; my thighs and body form another angle; and my head reclines on my breast, so that I am a pretty accurate representation of a Z; in a word, I am an abridgement of human miseries. This I have thought proper to tell those who have never seen me, because there are some facetious persons who amuse themselves at my expence, and describe me as made in a different way from what I am. Some say I am a *Cul de Jatte*; others that I have no thighs, and am set on a table in a case; others, that my hat is appended to a cord, which, by means of a pulley, I raise and let down to salute those who visit me. I have, therefore, got an engraving, in which I am accurately represented; indeed, among your wry-necked people, I pass for one of the handsomest."

With a view of alleviating his sufferings, Scarron visited different baths in France, but always returned to Paris in the same state of distortion in which he had left it. In addition to his other calamities he now found himself much embarrassed in his circumstances. After his father's death he and his full sisters became involved in a law-suit with his stepmother and her daughters, which he lost. The case, or *factum*, which he drew up for the occasion, is entitled "Petition, or whatever you please, for Paul Scarron, Dean of the sick People of France,

Anne and Frances Scarron, all three much incommoded in their Persons and Circumstances, Defenders, against the Husband of Magdalane Scarron, &c. all whole and healthy, and making merry at the expence of others." The remainder of the petition is in a style of absurdity corresponding to its burlesque title. To add to his burdens, his two full sisters now consented to reside with him at Paris; of them he used to say, 'que l' une aimoit le vin, et l' autre les hommes.' At length he was considerably relieved in his circumstances by a pension from Cardinal Richelieu, and another from Anne of Austria. In 1646 he also obtained a living in the diocese of Mans from the bishop, and, as we have already seen, he began his Roman Comique on going to take possession of it.

Soon after his return to Paris, he became acquainted with Mademoiselle D'Aubigné, who lived with her mother in indigent circumstances, in a house opposite to that in which Scarron resided; and in two years after the first formation of this acquaintance, he was united to the young lady, who was now sixteen years of age. By this marriage Scarron lost his benefice at Mans, but still derived from it a considerable annual revenue, as he had sufficient interest to procure it for the *valet de chambre* of his friend Menage, who received the clerical tonsure for the occasion.

Scarron had formed expectations of a pension through the interest of the Cardinal Mazarine, and had dedicated to him one of his poems. In this hope he was totally disappointed, and accordingly wrote a satire, and suppressed an eulogy, of the minister. His house became a frequent place of rendezvous for those who were discon-



*trated with Mazarine, and who, collectively, have been so well known under the appellation of the Fonde. His most frequent visitors were Menage, Pellisson, and Sarrazin. In the society which resorted to the residence of her husband, Mad. de Scarron probably acquired those accomplishments of person and character, which laid the foundation of her future destiny.*

The infirmities of Scarron daily increased ; but he still continued to occupy himself in writing *Vers Burlesques*. His principal composition in this style is the Virgil Travestic, on which his celebrity, for some time after his death, almost entirely rested. The chief pleasure now felt in the perusal of these productions, arises from our knowledge of the severity of the author's sufferings at the time he wrote them, and our admiration at his unalterable gaiety in the midst of so many misfortunes. But, indeed, in all ages—les gens qui font le plus rire sont ceux qui rient le moins.

Scarron was at length finally released from all his miseries in October, 1660. Every one knows that after his death his widow went to reside as an humble companion with a lady, at whose house she became acquainted with Mad. de Montespan. She was thus introduced to the notice of Lewis XIV., with whom she so long lived under the name of Mad. de Maintenon. Perhaps the elevation to which Mad. Scarron attained, might be the reason why none of his numerous friends wrote the life of her husband, nor collected the anecdotes current concerning him, as his remembrance was by no means agreeable to his widow, and till the last moment her flatterers abstained from every thing that might tend to revive the recollection. "On a tron affecté," says Voltaire. "d'oub-

No. III.—p. 103.

ANTOINE FURETIERE,

author of the *Roman Bourgeois*, was born at Paris, in 1620. After he had been received an advocate, and even obtained some law appointments, he passed into orders, and obtained the abbacy of Châlivoy. He was admitted into the French Academy, 1662, and printed in 1658 an allegorical satire on the eloquence of the time. His *Dictionnaire Universel de la langue Francoise*, which was the foundation of that known under the name of *Dictionnaire de Trevoux*, was not edited till after his death; for, having published a preliminary discourse, the farther printing was interdicted by the French Academy, which accused him of having purloined the materials which they had amassed for a similar work. Much was written on both sides on the subject of this controversy, and Furetiere spent the concluding years of his life in publishing libels against his former associates, which, according to the expression of one of the historians of the academy, “ne donnent pas une trop bonne idée de son esprit, et qui en donnent une bien plus mauvaise de son coeur.” Furetiere was finally convicted by the enemies he had

thus exasperated, and expelled the academy. His place was not supplied during his life, but on his death the academy manifested its surviving resentment, by forbidding Mr Bayle, his successor, to pronounce his eulogium.

Note IV.—p. 124.

GEORGE OF MONTEMAYOR

was born in Portugal, in the neighbourhood of Coimbra. When very young he went into Spain, and, in the quality of musician, attended the infant Don Philip, son of Charles the Fifth: when this prince ascended the throne under the name of Philip II., Montemayor remained in his service in the capacity of a poet and wit. In this employment he continued till his death, which happened in 1562, two years after the publication of the *Diana*, which was printed in seven books in 1560. The continuation in eight books, by the physician Alonzo Perez of Salamanca, appeared in 1564, and that of Gaspard Gil Polo in 1574.

No. V.—p. 186.

### LOUIS LE ROY DE GOMBERVILLE

was born in the beginning of the 17th century; he became an author at the age of fifteen, as he published a volume of poetry in 1624, consisting of quatrains, in honour of old age. He gave over writing romances about the age of forty-five, and in his frequent journies to his territory of Gomberville, having formed a particular connection with the Solitaries of Port-Royal, he became occupied with more serious concerns, entered on a penitentiary life, and wrote, it is said, a sonnet on the Sacrament; he relaxed, however, we are told, towards the end of his days.

No. VI—p. 194.

GAUTIER DE COSTES SEIGNEUR DE LA  
CALPRENEDE

was by birth a Gascon, and was educated at Thoulouse. He came first to Paris in 1632, and entered into the guards. In the year 1643, he married a woman, who, according to some writers, had five husbands; and it has been said that Calprenede was poisoned by her; this story, however, is not believed, as it has been pretty well ascertained that he died in 1663, in consequence of an accident he met with from horseback.

Besides his romances, Calprenede has written a great number of tragedies, as *La Mort de Mithridate*, *Le Comte d'Essex*, *Bradamante*, &c. &c. In his prefaces to these tragedies, and in his conversation, he showed a good deal of that disposition for which the Gascons are proverbial. Boileau discovered this even in the heroes of his dramas:—

“ Tout a l' humeur Gasconne en un auteur Gascon,  
Calprenede et Juba parlent du même ton.”

Cardinal Richelieu having read one of his tragedies, found the plot was tolerable, but declared the verses were *lâches*; this being reported to the author, he exclaimed, “ Comment ! *Lâches*—Cadêdis il n' y a rien de lache dans la maison de la Calprenede.”

No. VII.—p. 215.

## MADAME SCUDERI

was born at Havre, but came at an early period of her life to Paris, where she chiefly resided till her death, which happened in 1701, when she was in the 94th year of her age.

The Hotel de Rambouillet seems to have been the nursery in which the first blossoms of her genius were fostered; and it must be acknowledged, that if the succeeding fruits were not of the finest flavour, their bulk was such as almost to render competition hopeless. They at least procured her admission into all the academies where women could be received. She corresponded with Queen Christina, from whom she received a pension with marks of particular favour, and during several years her house was attended by a sort of literary club, which at that time seems to have been the highest ambition of the women of letters at Paris.

These honours did not preserve her, more than her brother, from the satire of Boileau. The pomp and self-conceit of the brother, and the extreme ugliness of the sister, furnished the poet with abundant topics of ridicule. The earliest romances of Mad. Scuderi were published under the name of her brother, and, in fact, he contributed his assistance to these compositions.

It is said, that M. and Mad. Scuderi, travelling together at a time when they were engaged in the composition of *Artamenes*, arrived at a small inn, where they entered into a discussion, whether they should kill the prince Mazares, one of the characters in that romance, by poison or a dagger; two merchants who overheard them, procured their arrest, and they were in consequence conducted to the *Conciergerie*, but dismissed after an explanation. A similar story has been somewhere related of Beaumont and Fletcher. While these dramatists were planning the plot of one of their tragedies at a tavern, the former was overheard to say, "I'll undertake to kill the king." Information being given of this apparently treasonable design, they were instantly apprehended, but were dismissed on explaining that they had merely imagined the death of a theatrical monarch.

No. VIII.—p. 241.

MADAME LA FAYETTE

was daughter of Aymar de la Vergne, governor of Havre de Gracc. In 1655 she married Francis, Count de la Fayette. She was held in high esteem in the reign of Lewis XIV., and was much admired by all the wits of the period, who frequently assembled at her house, and to many of whom she was a liberal benefactress. Se-grais, after being obliged to quit his residence with Ma-

demoiselle Montpensier, became domesticated with Mad. La Fayette, and was the chief director of her literary pursuits. In his name her two celebrated romances were first given to the public, and it was on the appearance of *Zayde*, that Huet had the complaisance to write his excellent essay on the origin of romance. Besides her novels, Mad. La Fayette is author of *Memoirs of the Court of France*, in 1688, &c., *History of Henrietta of England*, and *Portraits of Persons about Court*; works admired for the same graces of style, and delicacy of sentiment, which characterize her *Zayde* and *Princess of Cleves*.

## No. IX.—p. 255.

## MARIVAUX

was born in 1688, and died in 1763; his life is not composed of many incidents; he was twice married, was very poor and very charitable, and very easily offended, particularly in any thing relating to his own works. His conversation, we are told, was singular, and for some time amusing, but at length became fatiguing from its metaphysical monotony; he was a man of no learning, and had a special contempt for the poetry of Homer, on whom he wrote a parody; he also travestied the *Telemaque* of Fenelon. Besides these works, and his novels, he was the author of a number of dramatic pieces,



which were very successful on the Theatre Italien, but have contributed little to the posthumous fame of the author.

No. X.—p. 262.

### ANTOINE PREVOT

was born at Hesdin, in Artois, in 1697. In his youth he twice entered into the order of the Jesuits, which he twice quitted for a military life. Tired with dissipation, he became, after the accustomed noviciate, one of the Benedictines of St Maur. But scarcely had he taken the triple and irrevocable vow of chastity, obedience, and poverty, than he repented of his choice, and, disgusted with the restraint of the monastic profession, escaped into England, where he wrote some of his earliest works, and formed a tender connection, which removed him still farther from the bosom of the church. By the mediation, however, of the prince of Conti, he was permitted to return to France, and soon after became the secretary and grand almoner of his patron. In this situation he continued busily employed in the composition of numerous writings of all descriptions, till, having imprudently contributed to the periodical productions of a journalist, who indulged in rather free remarks on the government and religion of his country, he was banished to Brussels. He was soon, however, recalled to France, and entered

anew on those immense literary pursuits, of which the fruits were the *Histoire General de Voyages*, the translations of Richardson's novels, &c. The year preceding his decease, he retired from Paris to a small house at St Firmin, near Chantilly. His death happened in the neighbourhood of this retreat, in the shocking and unheard-of manner thus related by his biographer: "Comme il s'en retournoit seul a Saint-Firmin, le 23, Novembre 1763, par la forêt de Chantilly, il fut frappé d'une apoplexie subite, et demeura sur la place. Des paysans qui survinrent par hazard, ayant apperçu son corps étendu au pied d'un arbre, le portèrent au curé du village le plus prochain. Le Curé le fit déposer dans son église, en attendant la justice, qui fut appelée, comme c'est l'usage lorsqu'un cadavre a été trouvé. Elle se rassembla avec précipitation, et fit procéder sur le champ par le Chirurgien, a l'ouverture. Un cri du Malheureux, qui n'étoit pas mort, fit juger la vérité a celui qui dirigeoit l'instrument, et glaça d'effroi les assistans. Le chirurgien s'arreta; il étoit trop tard, le coup porté étoit mortel. L'Abbé Prevot ne r'ouvrit les yeux que pour voir l'appareil cruel qui l'environnoit, et de quelle maniere horrible on lui arrachoit la vie."

## No. XI.—p. 301.

## MAD. D'AULNOY, MURAT, AND LA FORCE,

were the three principal writers of fairy tales in France. The first of these ladies was the daughter of M. Le Jumel de Barneville, a gentleman of one of the first families of Normandy, and was married to Francis, Count D'Aulnoy. To the advantages of noble birth and alliance, she united those of beauty and wit—she was distinguished for the elegance of her manners, and talents for conversation. Besides her celebrity as the author of fairy tales, she is also well known by her *Travels in Spain*.

Mad. Murat, daughter of the Marquis de Castelnau, and wife of the Count de Murat, was born in 1670. She is said to have been of a very lively and ardent disposition, and devoted to pleasure, which is indeed acknowledged in the species of confession which she has made in the *Memoires de sa Vie*, a work which is believed to have been written by herself. She had the misfortune to displease Mad. de Maintenon, who suspected her of having written a libel, in which the private court of Lewis XIV., towards the close of the seventeenth century, was grossly insulted, and she was in consequence banished to a distance from the capital. She was recalled, however, in 1715, by the regent, duke of Orleans, at the intercession of Mad. de Parabere, her intimate friend.

She did not, however, long enjoy the pleasure of again partaking in the amusements of the capital, as she died at Paris the year after her recall.

Mademoiselle de la Force was grand-daughter of Jacques de Caumont, subsequently Duc de la Forcc, whose escape from the massacre of St Bartholomew has been celebrated in the *Henriade*, and who afterwards greatly signalized himself by his exploits, during the reigns of Henry IV. and Lewis XIII. His grand-daughter was united, in 1637, to Charles de Brion, but the marriage was declared null ten days after its celebration. She survived this short union nearly forty years, during which she distinguished herself by various compositions, besides her *Contes de Fées*. Of these productions, her poetical epistle to Mad. de Maintenon, and her *Chateau en Espagne*, have been chiefly celebrated.



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## • ERRATA.

### VOL. I.

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- P. 7, l. 7, *for Diano, r. Diana.*
- 244, l. 9, *for translated, r. written.*
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- 271, l. 3, *for Angelor, r. Angelo.*
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### VOL. III.

- P. 62, l. 5, *for goose, r. pig.*
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- 425, l. 16, *for female, r. feeble.*









